The Relevance Of Mahatma Gandhi To The World Of Thought

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GANDHI CENTENARY Volume

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to
The World of Thought

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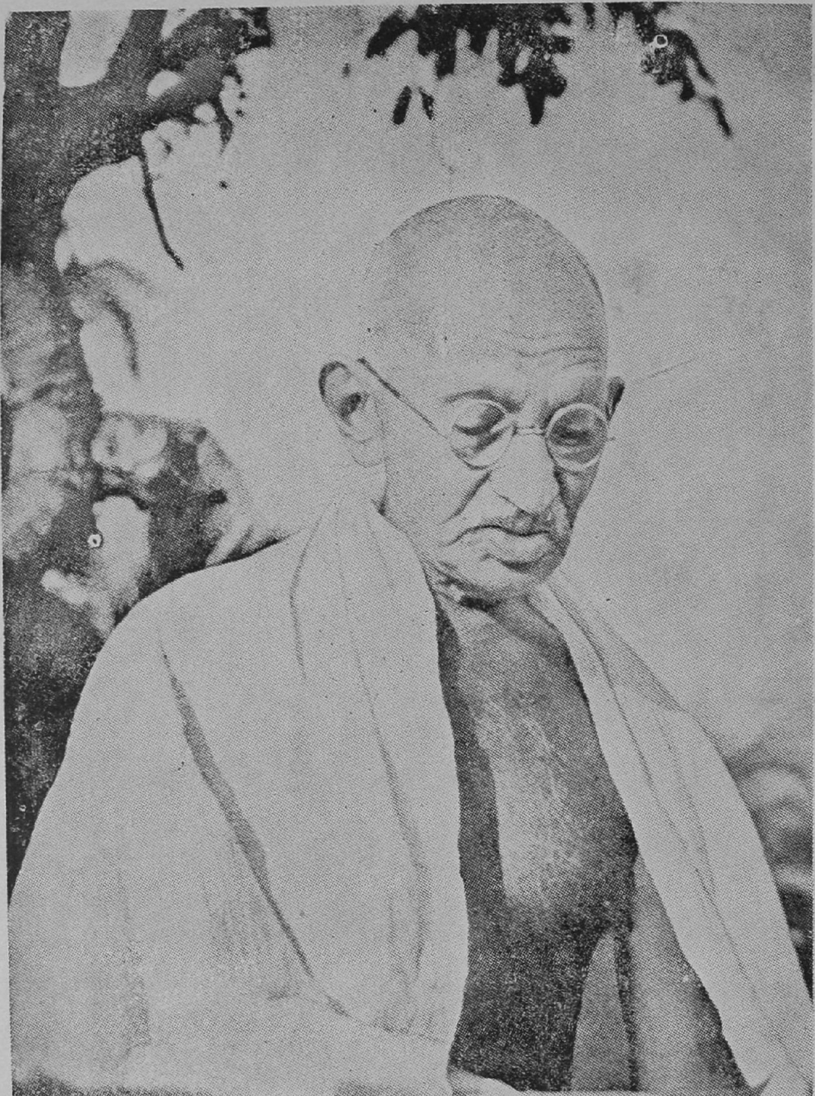

THE RELEVANCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI TO THE WORLD OF THOUGHT

GANDHI CENTENARY VOLUME

Editor :

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CONTENTS

Page No.

FOREWORD v

PREFACE vii

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS TO THE VOLUME ... ix

WELCOME ADDRESS
by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan 1

INAUGURAL ADDRESS
by Dr. R. R. Diwakar 6

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS
by Mr. U. N. Dhebar 17

GANDHIJI AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION
by Prof. M. M. Bhatt 27

GANDHI AND TAGORE
by Prof. K. Chandrasekharan 32

TRUTH IN GANDHI'S THOUGHT
by Dr. S. E. Demetrian 42

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOHPY OF SARVODAYA
by Mr. T. S. Devadoss 49

DYNAMISM OF FAITH
by Dr. V. A. Devasenapathi 61

MEANS AND ENDS: THE GANDHIAN VIEW
by Dr. S. Gopalan 68

THE CREED OF NON-VIOLENCE AS CONCEIVED BY GANDHI
by Mr. Hyder Ali Khan 73

BUDDHA, ASOKA AND GANDHI — A STUDY IN COMPARISON
by Dr. T. V. Mahalingam 80

THE GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF DHARMA
by Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao 91

THE RELEVANCE OF GANDHISM TO CONTEMPORARY INDIA
by Dr. C. A. Perumal 99

GANDHIJI AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION
by Dr. K. K Pillay 104

TRADITIONAL ROOTS OF SOME LEADING GANDHIAN IDEAS AND IDEALS
by Dr. V. Raghavan 112

THE INDUSTRIAL STATE AND GANDHI
by Dr K. Rajaratnam 126

THE IMPACT OF GANDHISM ON THE INDIAN LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL THINKING
by Professor T. S. Rama Rao 136

THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM AS MAHATMA GANDHI VIEWED IT
by Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu 147

EONOMIC IDEAS OF MAHATMA GANDHI IN RETROSPECT
by Dr. V. Shanmugasundaram 164

COMMUNAL HARMONY AS VIEWED BY MAHATMA GANDHI
by Md. Yousuf Kokan 176

FOREWORD

This Centenary Volume tells us about the Mahatma and his dynamic and wonderful personality that has gripped the minds of the millions of India. Gandhiji belongs to the category of those few who combine to influence humanity through their life and message long after their physical bodies cease to exist. Such greatness discloses something universal and abiding, in the midst of much that is narrow and fleeting in the ideas and values, radiated by the leader by his life and message. Twenty years after his death and on the eve of the first centenary of his birth, it would be wise to consider the impact of his life and thought on India and the world.

This Centenary volume is a collection of scholarly contributions on a wide range of subjects—philosophical, ethico-religious, social, political etc., — of Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to the world of thought, by some of his close associates and by learned Professors and Scholars of the University of Madras. It is gratifying to record that Shri R. R. Diwakar, Chairman of the Gandhi Centenary Committee, Shri U. N. Dhebar, and Shri G. Ramachandran who were closely associated with Gandhiji in different ways, participated on the occasion of the Seminar.

It is not possible, within the compass of a Foreword, to give even a brief outline of the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi to the world of thought. Everything about Gandhiji is so intimately involved with the actualities of the nation's life; his advice and counsel always have an immediate problem or task in view that we are likely to miss or minimise the larger background of his thought and action. His concern with concrete tasks, his genius for sharp practical solutions, even the manner and style of his writing as well as his life are so immediate and to the point that we seldom notice the eternal verities and truths on which they are based. But when he described his life as an experimentation with truth, the emphasis falls equally on the changing experimentation and the abiding truth.

Gandhiji was not a systematic theorist; nor was he the builder of a conceptual edifice; but this is not to say that he lacked philosophical vision. Rather, his philosophy had taken such deep roots in him that it could flower out in the form of a concrete advice and action. His proposals and plans were always rooted in his basic vision of universal love and all abiding truth. It is with this vision that Gandhiji went out to meet the world and conquer it, not by means

of an enchanting utopia, nor in terms of a fanciful idealism but in terms of strenuous practicality and immediate relevance. Ultimately Gandhiji—the saint of Sevagram is a luminary of the world and not of the nation alone. His message of 'Sarvodaya' carries across the problems and perplexities of India to the world at large. In this time of travail and crisis, when a new mode of life is struggling to be borne amidst the confusion, the anguish and the torment of the modern world, the Mahatma shows us the path to perfection and peace. Will the civilised nations care to understand and follow Gandhiji's teachings and save themselves and the whole world from the catastrophe which may otherwise befall them?

Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, Director of the Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras deserves our grateful thanks for willingly taking upon himself the strenuous task of organizing and editing the volume.

I have great pleasure in commending this Centenary volume to the reading public and I am confident that it will prove to be not only interesting reading but highly educative.

(Sd) N. D. SUNDARAVADIVELU,
Vice-Chancellor,
University of Madras.

Madras,
September 29, 1969.

PREFACE

At the suggestion of the National Committee for the Gandhi Centenary set up by the Government of India, a four-day Seminar on the Teachings of Mahatma Gandhi commencing on the 25th of November 1968 was held under the auspices of the University of Madras. The theme chosen for the Seminar was "The Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi to the World of Thought", and seventeen scholars from the various Research Departments of the University presented papers. Though the themes chosen by the different scholars may be diverse, and the authors who have worked on them belong to different departments, teaching and specializing in disciplines which seem on the surface to be very different from each other, every one of the papers reflects the healthy synthesis of life and thought Gandhiji was successful in evolving.

To Gandhiji, as it has been to thinkers the world over who have been seriously concerned with the welfare and progress of humanity, human life derives its significance from the fact that it represents not just the conscious state but the self-conscious, not merely the reflective but the consequent self-correctional stage, in the scheme of evolution. Such a view of life is but the basis of a way of life in which religion and politics no less than philosophy and sociology get synthesized in such a way that they transform and reciprocally determine the "core of consequence" of one another. The individual, in such a comprehensive view and way of life is considered the "prime-mover", accorded a dignified status and vested with the responsibility of realizing his ideals. Society and wider still, humanity at large get a deeper meaning and the unity of all being becomes an article of faith, well-tempered by reason, and the consciousness of it, the *sine qua non* for realizing the true human ideal.

Gandhiji was aware of his own imperfection and hence was sympathetic to the frailties of man; but he refused to be pessimistic about the possibility of attaining a sense of fulfilment in life, achieving perfection of individuals and institutions, and bringing the ideals down to the earth—transforming man's life for the better. He appreciated the fact that this was an arduous task for man, but held throughout his life that the "human situation" requires the aiming at the ideal of perfection and employing means which would justify the unique status of man. Prefering to call himself a practical idealist rather than a visionary, it is no wonder he emphasized

the means for the task of transformation of humanity. The deep psychological insight he had was responsible for his understanding and realistic approach to human problems, and the profound sense of humanity he possessed is responsible for the universal import of his teachings and the relevance of his views to the contemporary situation.

The papers presented in this Volume reflect the various aspects of Gandhian thought, and it is hoped that a detailed study of the different facets of the teachings of Gandhiji is bound to be fruitful to any one trying to comprehend the Mahatma. The papers published in this Volume are concise, though penetrative presentations, of the major aspects of Gandhian thought and, represent the humble submission, to the thought-world, of reflections and analyses of the contributors on the occasion of the observance of the Gandhi Centenary.

We are thankful to Dr. R. R. Diwakar for delivering the Inaugural address, Thiru G. Ramachandran for addressing a public meeting organized on the occasion and Thiru U. N. Dhebar for delivering the Valedictory address. Since Thiru. G. Ramachandran delivered extempore speech, it has not been possible to publish the same in this Volume. Our grateful thanks are due to our former Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Sir A. L. Mudaliar for all the suggestions and encouragement he gave for the organization of the Seminar and to the National Committee for the Gandhi Centenary, New Delhi, and to the University of Madras for their financial assistance. We record with deep appreciation the encouragement given by our Vice-Chancellor, Thiru. N. D. Sundaravadivelu and the Syndicate of the University which has made possible the publication of the Volume in time for the Gandhi Centenary on the 2nd of October, 1969.

My thanks are due to Dr. S. Gopalan, Thiru T. S. Devadoss and Thirumathi T. Kasthuri of the Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, Madras, for assisting me in going through the proofs and to M/S Manorama Press, Madras, for having completed the printing in a very short time.

Madras,
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WELCOME ADDRESS: THE RELEVANCE OF MAHATMA GANDHI TO THE WORLD OF THOUGHT

Respected Vice-Chancellor, Dr Diwakar, and Friends:

It is my pleasant privilege to welcome you to this Seminar on the Teachings of Mahatma Gandhi organized by this University in cooperation with the National Committee for the Gandhi Centenary. The inspiring leadership of our Vice-Chancellor has provided the motive force for the planning of this Seminar. At a meeting of the Heads of the University Departments of Teaching and Research held on the 9th of August this year, he explained the significance of the proposed Seminar and suggested that the discussion should be on a high academic level and that the papers to be presented might centre round the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi to the various aspects of life and thought. The participants, most of them Professors and Heads of Departments, are all drawn from the University community; the papers that they will present during the next three days will cover the major aspects of the Gandhian **Weltanschauung.**

That Mahatma Gandhi was a great leader of action is recognized universally; but what is not so well known is that he was also a profound thinker, that his actions sprang from mature meditation. He was first and foremost, as he described himself, a votary of Truth, a seeker after Truth. And in his search for Truth, he adopted what may be called the scientific attitude—'scientific' in the sense that he relied on experiments, that he was a learner all the time, that failures no less than successes had their lessons for him, that he was prepared to sacrifice even his life in the pursuit of Truth. "I am not aching for martyrdom", he once declared, "but if it comes in the prosecution of what I consider to be the supreme duty in defence of the faith I hold.........I shall have earned it." And, as it turned out to our utter regret, the Mahatma had to die a martyr for the principles which he held on to relentlessly till the end. There could be no truer example of the truly scientific spirit.

Truth and non-violence are the twin-principles which Mahatma Gandhi held dearer than even his life. The disclosure of the nature of these principles came to him as a result of persistent inquiry. If research even in the sphere of the external is exacting, the investigation in the realm of the eternal must call for greater sacrifices. The latter inquiry could be undertaken only by those who are cast in the highest mould—those who have gone through, or are prepared to go through, the most rigorous discipline involving the virtues of rectitude, dispassion, and freedom from partiality and partisanship. Mahatma Gandhi was of this rare type—of those who disown Mahatmaship, but whom the world irresistibly reveres as great souls.

In a striking passage, Gandhi records: "I am but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found a way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, i.e., to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations."

Disclaiming any title to scholarship, Mahatma Gandhi says that during his scholastic career he had read very little outside his text books, and that after he entered active political life he had very little time left for reading. But he admits that what he read, especially the texts like the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the Sermon on the Mount, and authors such as Tolstoy and Ruskin, he made a part of his life. It is not the quantum of reading that ultimately matters, but the quality; and even more, the application of what one had read—the significant part of it—to one's actual life. If this is what a scholar should do, Gandhi was a scholar **par excellence.** He had a searching mind, a questing spirit. This was responsible for his innate humility, his utter resignation to the light within, and his ceaseless prayer: 'One step enough for me'.

The realization of Absolute Truth, Gandhi recognized, is a distant goal, the consummation of one's spiritual quest. But that Absolute Truth as reflected in the relative truth, he regarded as his beacon, his shield and buckler. "Though this path is straight and narrow and sharp as the razor's edge", he says, "for me it has been the quickest and easiest. Even my Himalayan blunders have seemed trifling to me because I have kept strictly to this path. For the path has saved me from coming to grief, and I have gone forward according to my light. Often in my progress I have had faint glimpses of the Absolute Truth, God, and daily the conviction is growing upon me that He alone is real and all else is unreal."

In the pursuit of the path of truth, Gandhi makes it very plain, his attitude and outlook are those of the scientist. Especially with reference to the principle of non-violence and its practice, he says that his experiments carry with them scientific precision. Describing himself as but a humble explorer of the science of non-violence, he confesses, "Its hidden depths sometimes stagger me just as much as they stagger fellow-workers." Another significant statement of Gandhi is to this effect: "I have been a 'gambler' all my life. In my passion for finding truth and in relentlessly following out my faith in non-violence, I have counted no stake too great. In doing so I have erred, if at all, in the company of the most distinguished scientists of any age and any clime."

In the discoveries he made, and in the decisions he took, Gandhi had the unfailing guidance of what he called "the inner voice." There should be no mistake about what this expression means. Gandhi himself employs several alternative expressions to indicate what the "voice within" stands for: conscience, the inner basic nature, the little thing which resides in the heart, the Voice of God, the Voice of Truth, the Still Small Voice, and even the "dictates of reason." Of one thing, Gandhi wants us to be clear: it is not of a wild imagination that he speaks. Describing one such experience of hearing the Voice, he says: "What I did hear was like a Voice from afar and yet quite near. It was as unmistakable as some human voice definitely speaking to me, and irresistible. I was not dreaming at the time I heard the Voice. The hearing of the Voice was preceded by a terrific struggle within me. Suddenly the Voice came upon me. I listened, made certain it was the Voice, and the struggle ceased. I was calm." This is not a fanciful claim, we are assured. Anyone can hear the Voice and be guided by it, if he but care and go through the requisite discipline. "There is no question of hallucination", he declares, "I have stated a simple scientific truth, thus to be tested by all who have the will and the patience to acquire the necessary qualifications, which are again incredibly simple to understand and easy enough to acquire where there is determination."

This, however, is not an invitation to throw off Reason to the winds. Reason and Faith are not the opposites of each other. Unfaithful reason and irrational faith are, in fact, contradictions in terms. Reason gains stability through faith, and faith acquires clarity through reason. Seeing faith may go beyond speculative reason; but on that account it does not become the contrary of reason. There is need for insight even in the physical sciences. In the realms in which Mahatma Gandhi lived and thought, discerning faith is quite indispensable. And so, we find him declaring, "Without faith this

world would come to naught in a moment. True faith is appropriation of the reasoned experience of people whom we believe to have lived a life purified by prayer and penance." Again, he shows how unbridled rationalism could become a superstition and source of great harm: "Experience has humbled me enough to let me realize the specific limitations of reason. Just as matter misplaced becomes dirt, reason misused becomes lunacy......Rationalists are admirable beings, rationalism is a hideous monster when it claims for itself omnipotence. Attribution of omnipotence to reason is as bad a piece of idolatry as is worship of stock and stone believing it to be God."

Mahatma Gandhi used to say that he was not so much interested in teaching his philosophy of life as in practising it, that his deeds would survive his words. He exhorted the people not to cleave to his name but to his principles. Character and conduct count, not creeds. The ideal teacher is he who instructs by example more than through words. In the case of the great ones, there is no divergence between thoughts, words, and deeds. They are one in mind, speech and action.

manasy-ekam vācasy-ekam

karmaṇy-ekam mahātmanām.

Such a great one was Mahatma Gandhi. He was a seer and thinker of unimpeachable repute. He has left an indelible mark on human history, contributing to its richness and true progress. In our Seminar, we shall approach his magnificent personality and great ideas, as seekers for the light of knowledge in our different areas of study. It is thus that we shall pay our homage to a world-teacher who is the Father of the Nation and who gave us the vision of excellence.

It is our good fortune that we have been able to secure the services of Sri Ranganatha Ramachandra Diwakar for inaugurating this Seminar. Besides being a staunch follower of Mahatma Gandhi with a long record of service to the Nation as freedom-fighter, Union Minister, and Governor, Sri Diwakar is essentially a teacher, thinker, and writer. He started life as a school teacher and subsequently became a Professor of English. His biographies of saints and prophets like Gautama the Buddha, Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Aurobindo, reveal his profound insight into the perennial philosophy of India. His writings on Gandhi are marked for their lustre and lucidity. This is a very busy year for him, as he is the Honorary Secretary of the National Committee for the Gandhi Centenary. We are happy that he has found it possible to accept our invitation to inaugurate this

Seminar. He has chosen a greatly significant theme for his address today: "Satyāgraha as a Way of Life and as part of Social Change."

It is gratifying that Sri G. Ramachandran is present with us this evening. As Chairman of the Sub-committee for National and International Seminars, it was he that made the proposal to our Vice-Chancellor that the University organize a Seminar during the Gandhi Birth-Centenary year. We appreciate also his acceding to our request to deliver a public lecture in connection with the present Seminar. He is to speak tomorrow evening on "The Message of the Gandhi Centenary."

May I offer, once again, a warm welcome to all of you, and request our distinguished Vice-Chancellor to preside over this Inaugural Meeting!

R. R. Diwakar

INAUGURAL ADDRESS: SATYAGRAHA AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Respected Vice-Chancellor Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Prof. T. M. P. Mahadevan and Friends,

I deem it an honour to have been invited to give the inaugural address on the occasion of a high level academic Seminar on "Mahatma Gandhi and his relevance to the World of Thought." I am very fortunate that a seasoned and experienced educationist and an efficient administrator like Dr. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, is presiding over this Seminar. Which institution can be a better sponsor of such a Seminar during Gandhi Centenary than the Madras University which has noble traditions of scholarship and educational leadership?

I also note that Shri G. Ramachandran is present here. He is the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on International Seminars during the Centenary period which are being organised by the National Committee for Gandhi Centenary. This Seminar is as it were participating in the Indiawide programme of Seminars by Universities. This series of Seminars will be crowned with an International Seminar on Gandhi on the 30th of January 1970 in India.

While I am speaking of these Seminars in India I am glad to say that the UNESCO has called upon the 125 free member-nations to observe the 2nd of October 1968 to 2nd of October 1969 as the International Gandhi Centenary. While there were only 58 nations which were free in 1948, we have today 125 free nations. India's independence itself, which came to us by unique means under the leadership of Gandhi, liberated forces and had the power of sweeping away the vestiges of old type imperialism and colonialism. As a part of the Centenary observance, the UNESCO itself is holding an

International Seminar on 'Truth and Non-violence in Gandhi's Humanism' at Paris on the 2nd of October 1969.

In this background we are all here with the Vice-Chancellor as our Chairman, to address ourselves to the Relevance of Gandhi to the World of thought. Personally speaking, I cannot isolate the world of thought from the world of emotions and from the world of action. The human mind is an integrated one in which thinking, feeling and willing act not only in coordination but as an integrated whole.

I am sure that the learned professors and teachers who are going to take part in this Seminar will appreciate what I have said and take into account the inter-relationship between thought, emotion and action.

In my own mind, I have no doubt that Gandhi is immensely relevant as well as significant. Dr. Martin Luther King (Jr.), martyr to the Negro cause, who was the latest to tread the path of active non-violent resistance to whatever came in the way of the exercise of civil rights by the Negroes of America, once gave a reply to this question of relevance of Gandhi. He was here in India with his sweet wife for a month in the year 1958-59. At a Press Conference at Delhi he was asked a question as to whether Gandhi was relevant today, i.e., in 1958-59. Dr. King looked up and said 'Gandhi is inevitable'. But, here, in this Seminar, we have to go into some details and examine the relevance of Gandhi in the different fields of human activity such as economic, social, political, religious and so on.

When I was requested to inaugurate this Seminar, I thought that I should not merely deal in generalities but read a paper which can be incorporated as a part of the proceedings of this Seminar. I chose the subject "Satyagraha a New Way of Life and a New Technique of Social Change." I crave the indulgence of the Chairman and the audience to express my thoughts on this great theme.

Satyāgraha is primarily and essentially a new way of life. One of the very recent biographers of Gandhi, Geoffrey Ashe writes in his book 'Gandhi' in the Chapter entitled 'Truth Force': "This new thing which came into the world through Gandhi was *Satyāgraha* — variously but inadequately translated, 'passive resistance', 'civil disobedience' and 'non-violent non-cooperation." Here the author refers more to the new technique than to the new way of life which really is far more important. It is the new way of life which

provides the real basis, the strategy and the philosophy for the new technique.

Gandhi pointed out as far back as the early days of the South African struggle in his speech at Germistone that his *Satyāgraha* was quite different from passive resistance and such other methods and expressions. The orientation of *Satyāgraha* was quite different from that of other methods of fighting evil and injustice. *Satyāgraha* being based on truth-force and non-violence, a *Satyāgrahi* would never think of using violence even if he could and he would suffer without ill-will against his opponent. Therefore even the name of the 'Passive Resistance Association', in South Africa was changed into 'Satyagraha Association' as soon as Gandhi found an Indian name for his way of fighting evil. Passive resistance, civil disobedience and such other methods when adopted in pursuit of truth and justice and when they eschew violence, are at best corollaries of the *Satyāgraha* way of life. There is no doubt that when a true *Satyāgrahi* is faced by evil or injustice he does employ a new technique of non-violent resistance, which on its surface resembles any ordinary passive resistance. It is this resemblance and the results which Gandhi achieved by the *Satyāgraha* techniques in various walks of life, which are responsible for the predominant interpretation of *Satyāgraha* as only a non-violent way of resistance. In fact, what Gandhi conceived and practised was the *Satyāgraha* way of life, and for him, *Satyāgraha* as a weapon for fighting evil and for social change was a by-product. Relentless pursuit of truth through love or non-violence alone would be the normal way of life of *Satyāgrahi*. But when confronted with evil or injustice, he would resort to non-violent resistance and self-suffering without the slightest ill-will towards the evil-doer. He would never shirk a struggle nor try to find an escape. One of the most important characteristics of the *Satyāgraha* way of life is never to tolerate or submit either to evil or injustice or tyranny of any kind. The foremost duty of a *Satyāgrahi* would always be to fight evil and injustice by non-violent resistance or be busy with steps which, if necessary, would culminate in such non-violent resistance even unto death. A *Satyāgrahi* will always declare, "resist evil you must but always through love and non-violence and yet without ill-will." To him the expression, resist not evil, means resist not evil by evil means, resist evil by good. What is totally banned for a *Satyāgrahi* is submission to evil, and the use of evil means. For, Gandhi stood for the principle that means must always be pure and ethical. Gandhi once remarked that 'Adharma-Virodha', that is, non-violent resistance of whatever was against the law of being, was the essence of the spirit of *Satyāgraha*.

It may be pointed out here that unadulterated non-violent resistance without ill-will can be offered only by those who have adopted *Satyāgraha* as a way of life. Gandhi often emphasised that in non-violent mass struggles, at least the leaders should be such as are imbued with the spirit of *Satyāgraha*. A *Satyāgrahi* offers non-violent resistance out of strength and bravery and not because he is helpless and cannot use violence. He would not use violence even if he could. Gandhi believed and declared that love and non-violence was the law of the human species as brute-force or violence was the law of the jungle.

If *Satyāgraha* is a new way of life, what are its distinct features? "Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills", as Gandhi himself has siad. But truth through non-violence alone is certainly a new feature. The application of this principle to every walk of life and all human affairs, and especially the use of this principle on a mass scale to fight evil and injustice, to establish truth and justice, is certainly a new feature. The emphasis on action which has always to be non-violent against all evil and every injustice also distinguishes the *Satyāgraha* way of life. The extension of this principle to all fields of life and to the solution of all conflicts, socio-economic as well as political, is again a new feature Two other features of the *Satyāgraha* way of life are: identification in spirit with all life not only human life—through love of or identity of interest, and the constant endeavour to serve and sacrifice for the good and welfare of all, beginning with the lowliest of the low and the poorest of the poor. These two features are coupled with non-violent resistance to every obstacle which comes in the way of this kind of services and sacrifice for the benefit of the whole of mankind and all life.

It is our good fortune that Gandhi has provided us with a fresh word for this new way of life. Old words often come in the way of right interpretation. *Satyāgraha* is a Sanskrit word. It is a compound of two words, *Satya*-truth that which is according to what is or exists; and *Āgraha*—insistence or adherence. Both together now indicate a new way of life. The word violence or love is not found in the compound word. It is understood that the insistence on truth is non-violent. *Satyāgraha* indicates or rather connotes the Dharma or the law of being of the person concerned. There are several compound words in Sanskrit with *Satya* as a component. For instance, *Satya-sandha* (wedded to truth), *Satya-vṛta* (one who has taken a vow to speak and act truth), *Satya-vān* (one who is truthful), *Satya-dhṛti* (one whose determinations is firm), *Satyāśraya* (one who relies on truth) and so on. But I have not so far come across in the whole of Sanskrit literature the word

Satyāgraha or *Satyāgrahi*. It was reserved for Gandhi to coin the word as well as to evolve its full connotation during his eventful life. It is now not only a way of life with a philosophy of action but also a new technique of social change with high potentialities in the future. Gandhi's life, thought and action can be said to be a running commentary, illustrative, interpretative, and expositive, on *Satyāgraha*.

Gandhi has called *Satyāgraha* a science and an art of life. He has mentioned that he is the author of *Satyāgraha*. He was thoroughly conscious of the newness of the way : he also knew that he was evolving that new way by living it as well as by preaching it. He never claimed that the evolution of *Satyāgraha* was ever complete. On the other hand, if questioned, he would have said that *Satyāgraha*, both as a way of life and means of social change was still growing and there was nothing like finality. The evolution of *Satyāgraha* is linked with human evolution itself.

Gandhi has significantly called his autobiography 'My Experiments with Truth'. *Satyāgraha* is an unceasing quest for truth and identification with it. It has to be sought through non-violence and sought to be established also through non-violence or love because there cannot be any identification without love or feeling of oneness and when found it cannot be forced on others by violence. Force, coercion, violence are the instruments of blind power and not vehicles of truth. Love and non-violence alone can permanently convey and establish truth. Moreover, however perfect a man might be, he cannot be sure that his perception alone is true. Therefore, it is best that he uses love and non-violence and self-suffering as his channels to convey truth to others.

Truth to Gandhi was both transcendental and immanent. In fact whatever was immanent was but the manifestation of the transcendental. The way to the transcendental also lay through the immanent. His quest was for both in equal measure. It was this belief and experience of his which saved him from escapism into metaphysics and made him the torch-bearer for spiritualising actively the whole of life. Truth of daily life and experience was not merely for knowing it intellectually. To find the truth was only the beginning. To understand it, to experience it, to express it and to establish it is the main function of a *Satyāgrahi*. That he has to do through love alone. The law and experience of life, the evils and injustice, the misery and sufferings of millions were the things of utmost concern to him as he identified himself with the whole of humanity. Self-realisation, seeing God face to face was his passion and it meant for him the constant consciousness of an eternal presence, of the Truth

of life, as well as the manifestation of that truth in daily experience. He was intensely aware through identification of the sufferings of humanity and to him, to serve man was to serve God. God was not in need of service but his creatures were in need of it.

Now what are the means of knowing and living truth? It was to Gandhi, *ahimsā*, an approach to truth love, through identification. Our own inner weaknesses and selfish desires come in the way of the observance of *ahimsā* in its entirety. Man is an animal. Like all other animals he is full of fear about his own safety and security and his perpetuity. It is this desire which makes him fear everything 'other' than himself. Gandhi's endeavour was to see God or Truth in everything as he believed that there was some supreme power which was all-pervading and in which everything lived and moved and had its being. To Gandhi God was Truth, God was love, and God was law. Once truth was realised through love or identity, non-injury, non-violence would follow as a matter of course. Though *ahimsā* would ordinarily mean non-injury to person and to all sentient beings, Gandhi extended it even to property because he argued that injury to property would mean injury to the person or persons who have interest in that property!

Thus a way of life evolved, the essence of which was quest of truth, both transcendent and immanent, through *ahimsā* through love, through non-violence (non-injury) alone. This involved purification of the mind, shedding of all selfish desires, rising above the weaknesses of the flesh and a constant endeavour at seeing truth, knowing truth, realising truth and esablishing truth through service and total sacrifice, if need be. Martyrdom is thus the crown and apex of this discipline and spirituality the supreme value—spirituality here means the experience of essential oneness of all and becoming.

To Gandhi the decisive guide in the matter of finding truth was not any scripture or external authority or a Guru. He respected these traditional sources of light but his own conscience, evolving along the path of spirituality and based on truth and morality (ethics) was the real and de facto guide. He would say 'no' to all that did not pass the test of reason and morality, the twin god-given instruments of mankind for judging right and wrong.

A relevant question may be asked here as to why we should recognise *Satyāgraha* of Gandhi's conception and practice as new. Some special characteristics have already been indicated. But let us see further about it. Gandhi himself when questioned by different people at different times has replied, and recognised his debt to

various sources. But all that is like a seed and the growing plant expressing its gratefulness to the soil, the manure, and the water which nourishes it. Gandhi has mentioned the story of Harishchandra, of Prahlad. He has told of the maxim 'return' good for evil', which he read in the poem of Shamalbhat, a Gujerati poet, and how it took firm hold of his mind. Raychand, a pious Jain jeweller was almost like a spiritual advisor to him in the early days. Gandhi has recognised the influence of Socrates, of Christ of course, and of Mohammed, the prophet. Among books and writings, the *Gītā* the Sermon on the Mount in the Bible, Tostoy's 'Kingdom of God is Within You', Ruskin's 'Unto this Last' and Thoreau's 'Civil Disobedience' are prominent. The basic fact however remains that *Satyāgraha* as conceived and developed by Gandhi and as it evolved from stage to stage in his own life-time and expressed itself in the form of mass campaigns in various fields of activity, from the domestic to the international was new in its essence. Gandhi's claim to the authorship of the science and art of *Satyāgraha* has to stand unchallenged. Gandhi was humble enough to acknowledge generously the various sources. But it has to be admitted that not only the newness of *Satyāgraha* but its extension to the whole gamut of human affairs and its somewhat successful and persistent use for socio-economic changes on a vast and varied scale was due to the extraordinary moral genius of one man, Gandhi. At the same time, it is a matter for hope for mankind that this genius was not born but made.

If we scan the life of Gandhi from day to day, we see how a shy erring stripling fought bravely against his own weaknesses and built himself into a robust, mighty, moral force based on truthfulness and love. While alive, he shook and awakened the conscience of each man and of the whole of humanity along with shaking the very roots of the mightiest ever empire based and built on force, fraud and exploitation. It is our good ,fortune that his life has been documented more thoroughly and authentically than that of any great man, past or present. His life was an open book and what went on in his mind was also reflected in his own writings and was reported by many newspapers almost daily. He could be described as a public performer of Himalayan dimensions who let the audience peep freely into the green room all the time.

In the past history of man, many are the instances of individuals who have acted as *Satyāgrahis* and suffered martyrdom. In fact, the blood of martyrs has been the seed of new faiths and religions. There have also been instances of individuals who have acted as *Satyāgrahis* and suffered martyrdom. There have also been instances of groups

who have shown the same spirit and suffered patiently the same way as the *Satyāgrahi* followers of Gandhi. 'The Quiet Battle' by Sibley gives a number of historic instances of that type. But all those examples prove anew that Gandhi's conception and practice of *Satyāgraha,* both as a way of life and as instrument of social change have something new and unique in them which is not found in earlier examples. At any rate, in Gandhi's hands *Satyāgraha* got its metaphysics its philosophy, its mystique, its technique and its dynamism as well as its positive function in individual and social life.

It is true that Gandhi was born a Hindu and he declared also that he was a *Sanātani* Hindu. There is a powerful tradition of *ahimsā,* non-injury to sentient beings both in Hinduism and Jainism. Hinduism asserts that there is no *dharma,* there is law of life, greater than truth; truth alone triumphs and never untruth. *Ahimsā* as a means has a sacred place in Hindu thought. For Jainism, *ahimsā* is the greatest dharma. This is the dominating background of the Indian mind. We have several instances, both mythological and historical, of truthfulness and *ahimsā.* But they are mostly of individuals. When groups acted, as in the case of an exodus, though it was *Satyāgraha* of a sort, it was passive non-resistance rather than positive resistance for the establishment of truth which Gandhi introduced. The militant *Kṣatriya* type of positive non-violent resistance to evil and injustice is hardly found in the past history of India even though the atmosphere of truth and non-violence is to be found in the Indian tradition. The *Gītā* could yield the necessary militancy to Gandhi's mind only when he interpreted it as an allegory. Otherwise Sri Kṛṣṇa ultimately persuaded Arjuna to fight in a bloody fratricidal war and supplied him with the armour of supreme detachment. That freed Arjuna from the sin of bloodshed and even of some trickery. Looked at from this point of view, Gandhi's *ahimsā,* absolute and unadulterated *ahimsā,* is far in advance of the earlier interpretation and practice of *ahimsā* especially as a social principle and an ethical value.

There is one more unique feature of *Gandhi's Satyāgraha.* It has the quality of being contagious. The Pathans who had no traditions of non-violence, took it up as a means of resistance to tyranny and injustice. In distant U.S.A. the Negro leader, Dr. Martin Luther King (Jr.) adopted it with significant results. India and Indian traditions have been known to the world for several centuries. Yet no one in the world had discovered anything like *Satyāgraha* This itself proves once again that it is a new way evolved by Gandhi. It was reserved for Gandhi to initiate this new kind of civilized non-violent yet powerful way of fighting evil and injustice.

Now let us turn to the influences which Gandhi himself has mentioned at different times. The story of Harishchandra has perhaps no parallel in the matter of adherence to truth through self-suffering and conversion of the opponent. But it is a story of an individual and from mythology. In the story of Prahlad, while his sticking to truth at any cost is there, the redemption comes in the form of a violent death of the oppressor at the hands of the fourth incarnation of Viṣṇu, Narasimha, the man-lion. Return good for evil, is a remarkable ethical slogan but its roots and genesis in philosophy are not given anywhere. No detailed advice of Raychand is available and one cannot presume that it had the seeds of the *Satyāgraha* doctrine in it. The example of Socrates is an admirable story of individual *Satyāgraha* of the highest order. The pristine innocence and vicarious suffering ending in martyrdom of Jesus, though only an individual case of *satyāgraha* had in it the potency of inspiring generations to come to follow the path of humility and suffering and service of the people. Yet we miss much which Gandhi supplied and in a sense we can say that Gandhi came to fulfil. Gandhi admired Mohammed for his great and heroic qualities. The books and writings which have been mentioned above no doubt enriched Gandhi's stock in trade but cannot be said to have given any distinct mould to his *Satyāgraha*. Ruskin's book certainly influenced Gandhi's socio-economic thought and sense of social justice but not his ideas and practice of *Satyāgraha*. The most important essay on 'Civil Disobedience' by Thoreau has special significance since Gandhi used the same expression later. But it is said that he had already started his *Satyāgraha* before he came across this famous treatise. Even so, Thoreau was an individualist and did not make any attempt to lead any campaign or organise any resistance. The influence of Tolstoy, his writings, his encouragement to those who refused military service were all of great help to Gandhi in confirming his convictions. As a tribute to Tolstoy Gandhi named his colony 'Tolstoy Farm'. But beyond that we see no special Tolstoyan contribution to *Satyāgraha* as such, beyond the compliment he paid out of foresight to the campaign Gandhi had started in Transval. He said, what Gandhi was doing was not only important for Transval but for the whole of humanity. His prophetic insight has indeed come true.

All these things I have said are not meant to underestimate the contribution they have made to the shaping of Gandhi's full-fledged *Satyāgraha*. The fountain-head however of Gandhi's inspiration and strength was his belief in a single supreme power which was all-prevading eternal, infinite, and benevolent. His intense and single-minded effort to realise that truth and his faith that, that truth could be realised only through, *ahimsā* took him to spiritual heights which sustained him even in the darkest hour. The second postulate which

added dynamism to his whole life was that the perception of truth was not merely for contemplation or for individual salvation; it was there for declaring it to the world and for establishing it in human affairs not only for solving day to day problems but for lifting humanity from the present degraded state to higher levels of harmony, happiness, and peace.

It was this passion for realising truth through love alone and the passion to establish truth in daily life for social salvation through service and sacrifice, which was the basic fact about Gandhi and his *Satyāgraha* way of life. It is not easy to see truth as it is and therefore Gandhi laid down many rules for the guidance of *Satyāgrahis* The truth of any situation, the rightness and wrongness of any cause can be perceived only by a selfless, pure mind shorn of numerous weaknesses of the flesh. It is the realisation of the truth of situation, the unshakable conviction about the rightness of a cause, which gives immense strength to the *Satyāgrahi*. Because it is no longer the individual that acts but the strength of truth itself acts. The individual gets merged in the truth on account of love, identification, and his readiness to suffer unto death for the truth of his perception adds elemental strength to the cause. Non-violent fighting for truth is the shortest cut to success, for non-violence helps concentration on the cause of fighting and the common solution, without diverting the mind of either party to extraneous things.

The Gandhian approach though spiritual in essence is extremely a practical one. Once the individual's mind or the mind of the group engaged in *Satyāgraha* gets rooted in the truth of the situation and in the rightness of the cause by identification, it is no longer the individual who works but the power of truth takes over. And that power is stronger than any physical force; but it is the *Satyāgrghi* who has to awaken that power of truth and harness it for the cause of truth. As early as 1931, Gandhi told the Swiss pacifist Pierre Ceresole: "Truth is God and the way to find him is non-violence. Anger must be banished and fear and falsehood. You must lose yourself . . . . puriled you get power. It is not your own, it is God's (truth's)." God here obviously means, the ultimate supreme power, the very source of the cosmic law.

It should be remembered that Gandhian teaching, while it may help individual salvation, is not only not restricted to it, but it must overflow to include social salvation of the whole of mankind. In fact, the four words, namely, *satya* (truth), *ahimsā* (non-injury), *satyāgraha* (adherence to truth) and *sarvodaya* (welfare of all)

constitute a whole system of thought and action which envisages the collective salvation of humanity.

I have dealt in brief with the theme I took up. In fact the theme is as wide and as deep as the whole of life, thought and action of Gandhi. But, I thought, as a part of the Seminar proceedings, what I have said may be enough.

I know that many of the Universities in India and some institutions are holding Seminars on the several aspects of Gandhiji's teachings and action. Very recently from October 13th to 26th, a high level Seminar was held in Simla by the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies which its Director Shri Niharranjan Ray organised. I am confident, however, that this Madras University Seminar would be making a distinct contribution and bring upon the subject full thought and critical analysis. While there are different ways of observing the Gandhi Centenary, a University which is engaged in the promotion of education on higher levels can best serve the purpose of the Gandhi Centenary by initiating studies on the different aspects of Gandhian thought and action.

I thank once more the Vice-Chancellor and Professor T. M. P. Mahadevan for having given me the opportunity of placing before this erudite audience my thoughts on the special contribution which Gandhi has made to the science of life and to social dynamics.

U. N. Dhebar

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS : GANDHI AND FUTURE WORLD COMMUNITY

A speaker appearing before a rational audience like the University men and women has to take note that he cannot base his discourse merely on sentiment or emotion. Relating Gandhiji — with his non-violence, austerity and devotion to spinning wheel — to the modern world, is indeed a breath-taking task in that context.

I feel, sometimes, that in a way I am a renegade from what are called the modern approaches to the problems of human emancipation. I do not for a moment under-estimate the loyalty and devotion of those who have entered into a commitment to convert the entire human society to a new way of life. This new way of life has its bright spots. Science has made it possible to spread the benefits of health, housing and education to the distant most places in record time of a hundred years. It is reported that 40 per cent of youths in U.S.A. and 25 per cent of youths in U.S.S.R. between the ages of 20 and 24 are at colleges. The world is similarly on the verge of a computer revolution in the field of technology. The rate of production through automatons is simply staggering. According to Galbraith three firms in U.S.A. have a production level of nearly its entire farm products. The production on American farms, by any standard, ranks among the list of the highest in the world. Last but not the least thanks to science and technology man is no longer a slave to the environment in which he is born. He can with equal ease and confidence select his own environment in a country thousands of miles away.

To relate Gandhiji's concept of society functioning on the basis of plain living and high thinking to an extremely complicated socio-economic structure of an affluent society that is developing in the West would appear in the circumstances to be extremely ridiculous.

I am afraid, in the above background, I have sought to pick up a subject where I have little chance of convincing anyone, much less an audience so rational as the audience of University men and women. The hold and grip of 'what is' is always powerful for it has the advantage of being obvious. Whoever does try to think that below the depths of deep waters of the deepest rivers or the depths of the seas and oceans, there is hard rock! I am conscious that I am basing my thesis not on obvious but on what is not obvious — the invisible rock that lies below. The gains of science and technology converging on computer revolution, I must concede, are obvious. They have a lustre glamour. They produce formidable wealth. No wonder the Asian and African countries, which have newly won their freedom, are chasing the West in its way of life.

But I am equally concerned with the rock below. Nature, if nothing else, is most selective. She endows everything she creates with a special purpose. Special faculties she gives have a purpose. Human being has a purpose to serve and is endowed with special faculties to fulfil that purpose. Just as the gains of science and technology enumerated above are obvious, there is also an obvious truth at the base of science and technology and that obvious truth is that the special faculties endowed by nature to man serve the purpose for which the human being is created.

Man knows; man loves and man creates. These three special faculties of knowledge, love and creativity have their direct link with freedom, for there can be no knowledge without freedom; with dignity, for there can be no love without regard for dignity and with work, for creative life means nothing if it is not work which is the creative urge.

Man knows. He observes, analyses, synthesises and can decide between right and wrong. It is this that distinguishes man from lower creation. Man's insatiable thirst for knowledge in this wider context is something different from exploitation of that knowledge for purpose unconnected with love and creativity.

Man loves. There should be a link between knowledge and human love.

Man creates. The divorce between knowledge, love and creative faculties of man is unthinkable, rationally speaking.

But if we were to analyse the social picture of the new way of life which the countries of the West have nurtured and which the countries of Asia and Africa are trying to emulate, we can understand

not only the bright spots of the new way of life but its dark spots as well. The obvious will then be not only the bright spots which attract us and gravitate us to that way of life but also the dark spots which are pointers to the inner contradictions which must ultimately decide the fate of this new way of life. It is essential therefore that the obvious to the eye is related to the not-so-obvious — the essential purpose of human existence. While the obvious attracts him, it does not necessarily satisfy him.

Man's social nature has made him think of family as a part of himself. Next to the family comes the religious group. Recently he has realised the importance of the existence of a new group, of which the basis is the political interest of a community within a territorial area. There is thus a process of nature at work. The orbit of human relationship is continuously expanding from an individual to a family, from a family to a social group and from a social group to national groupings. This is not something that is artificial. Were it be artificial, the very strains involved in working for this everwidening existence would have kept him back from attempting it. But his inner urge to work continuously from an individual to an universal existence has kept man moving forward—driving forward —whatever the strains and tensions involved.

Similarly, the creative urges of man have kept him busy, studying nature, copying nature, finding out the meaning behind nature's ways and workmanship and ever working for greater knowledge of her functioning on the fundamental as well as technological side.

Ever-widening orbit of human relationship receives great impetus and help from the developments of science and technology. These developments derive a purpose and meaning from this widening horizon of human relationship. These processes of ever-widening relationship and the keenness to satisfy the creative urges through ever-increasing knowledge should therefore be, but they have not always been, working for an integrated development. Sometimes the positive aspects of that process have found themselves opposed to one another. This has resulted in frictions, sometimes on a ruinous scale.

These frictions at the moment threaten to envelop the whole human family and because of a lack of proper analysis of the deeper meaning of human existence, there is competition instead of collaboration and participation. The whole atmosphere is surcharged with violence, destruction and brutality. The world is loaded as seldom before with weapons of destruction with a capacity to destroy the entire mass of living creatures several times over. A part of the

human world is already busy employing these weapons for testing purposes in the various corners of the world.

It is necessary to understand this disintegrating process in its proper perspective. Dis-integration is not at the top but at the base. Positive aspects of human existence are not being attended to in keeping with nature's purpose, for the fulfilment of which human life exists. There have been distortions. There has been a divorce between love and knowledge on the one side and knowledge and creative urges on the other. This is in essence spiritual. Tensions and frictions that we see are symbolic of a struggle between groups of men who have forged a system which places the maximum emphasis upon knowledge and who are immersed in the thought of getting the maximum advantage out of it without regard to the relationship between it and the social aspects of human existence on the one side and the creative aspects of human existence on the other. The division of these groups into the radicals and the pragmatists has failed to yield satisfaction to the people therefrom.

Thoreau, Tolstoy, Gandhiji and Martin Luther King — went to the root of problems which faced humanity. To think of Gandhiji, a barrister, a successful barrister, a person who had travelled enough, a person who had opportunities of meeting, discussing and writing to the most learned of the learned people in the world simply because he went to the root of the problems, that he did not know about the advantages of scientific and technological discoveries would be a reflection upon the intelligence of those who consider themselves to be modern intelligent men and women. Gandhiji was faced with the problem and he posed this problem to us: "Can man be happy unless his basic urges were satisfied or can the basic urges of the human being be completely changed or altered that man would cease to be a social and creative being as the divorce between knowledge and these two urges imply? Can his basic urges be so altered that he would feel unconcerned about the question of a dignified existence for himself and society? Or about the inner harmony in his own life as well as in the life of society on which alone sure foundations of peace can be laid?"

Gandhiji posed these questions to us in order to ensure a durable and viable social order and not to decry science and technology. There was no denial of the scientific discoveries and technological progress. The question was of the relationship between science and technology and human happiness : " Can man be happy if he is starved on the side of his fundamental self whatever be the scientific and technological progress achieved? " Gandhiji's challenge to modern thinking lies in objectively studying as closely as possible

what he really meant to convey than his, suggesting a solution which fitted in with the obvious, which was only the outer shell and not the kernel.

Non-violence, austerity and charkha—they were all media he suggested to meet a situation. He was concerned more with the people understanding the rationale behind his insistence upon non-violence, austerity and charkha. What we have to decide is whether it is possible to make a human being happy without nourishing his real self or it is possible to replace these urges by others. This also involves a decision as to whether the basic urges are desirable or undesirable. If they are desirable then there can be no question of replacement unless we can search for something better. It is futile, however, to think in terms of replacing the urges because that is beyond the capacity of human beings. Compared to nature, human being is an imperfect instrument. It can interpret nature, even exploit it; but it cannot alter the course of nature. Even if it were possible to do so the urges themselves are so very healthy that it will not be in the interest of a human being to change them. The only question that remains is: "How do we reconcile the urges with the great and glamourous civilisation of the Affluent Society?"

Is mankind happy with the stock-piles? Every augmentation in the destructive capacity of weaponry has, instead of reducing fear, increased it. Greater and greater emphasis upon group existence has only worked to weaken the social bond between man and man the world over. The hatred and contempt with which citizens of one country are taught to look at that of another with whom the former does not agree knows no limit. It is ever so difficult to convince them that they both belong to the same race. Similarly the group consciousness based on colour is dragging the human being to the very brink of a racial and fratricidal war.

At the economic level the picture is much worse. The tariff walls and the competition to capture world markets do not produce an atmosphere of economic stability or security. A few months ago it was the Sterling in trouble; now it is the Franc. The imbalance in the economic basis between the Western European countries and U.S.A. is already creating suspicions. Western European countries already are working under a fear that they may not turn satellites of U.S.A. by the end of the century as the French author of 'The American Challenge' has pointed out. Already American investment in Electronics in the Western European countries is of a size that it can any day become a controlling factor. The potential of mass-scale production in U.S.A. has similarly out-matched anything the

Western European countries can hope to achieve. One American firm earns as much profit as ten top-ranking firms in England, France and Germany put together can earn.

Then the class-consciousness. More than half the world has already become Communist within a matter of fifty years. Mao-tse-tung considers that India and other under-developed countries are on the waiting list. The very thought that Mao-tse-tung is calculating on this appals U.S.A. and frightens Asiatic countries.

If science and technology by themselves could have worked for human freedom, dignity, justice, stability etc. resulting in human happiness, the picture would surely not have been so disappointing. If expectations have not been realised it is because of a gap in modern thinking. Science and technology are necessary. But simultaneously it is necessary to recognise that they have to be integrated with nature's scheme of creation of man. Then alone can man function as an integrated being.

Man cannot live without love. Love cannot be sold in packets; love is a response that flows from the heart. Denied this love, man must walk the path of savagery. The world today by walking the path of absolute indifference towards this basic characteristic of man is leading humanity towards savagery. It may be that the savage may have a brilliant brain. But he may be no different from a monkey fully drunk, with burning torches in his hands. Gandhi was and continues to be nature's lighthouse to signal danger; it is upto the rational man to realise the danger and make good the deficiency on the emotional side of human existence.

Albert Einstein has this to say about the present state of use of the human intelligence: "This topic brings me to that worst outcrop of the hard nature, the military system, which I abhor. That a man can take pleasure in marching in formation to the strains of a band is enough to make me despise him. He has only been given his big brain by mistake; a backbone was all he needed. This plague-spot of civilisation ought to be abolished with all possible speed. Heroism by order, senseless violence and all the pestilent nonsense that goes by the name of patriotism — how I hate them. War seems to me a mean, contemptible thing: I would rather be hacked in pieces than take part in such an abominable business. And yet so high, in spite of everything, is my opinion of the human race that I believe this bogey would have disappeared long ago, had the sound sense of the nations not been systematically corrupted by commercial and political interests acting through the schools and the press."

Similarly man with a creative genius can never find happiness with or satisfaction in enforced unemployment or under-employment. To deprive him of the opportunities for creative effort would be denying to him opportunity for growth and development as a human being. All creative effort produces satisfaction, even joy. It gives the individual a place of dignity in society. If the creative effort is linked with production for social use, it results in enriching society as well. While mass scale methods of production can ensure to society the satisfaction of being supplied with goods and commodities on a scale society considers necessary, the member of the society who is not usefully engaged in the social creative effort is deprived of an opportunity to contribute. The member of the society then vegetates and becomes a frustrated being whatever be the quantity of goods and commodities piled upon him. Khadi or charkha was a symbol of Gandhiji's concern to see that creative effort of the individual was linked with supply of useful articles of social necessity. It is not the tool or the piece of cloth that had so much importance. It was the idea that really mattered.

Gandhiji as the pioneer in the field of integrated approach in the cause of human development was concerned with fighting hatred and inertness—the two enemies of human natural responses to the urges of human life. It was characteristic of Gandhiji that he was not interested in idle criticism. He would go straight to the root of the problem and offer a solution within the means directly available. He based his struggle upon the need for an integrated approach where knowledge, human love and concern for satisfying the creative urges of man were all integrated into one activity.

Non-violence was thus a positive aspect of his struggle. It was not intended to combat stock-piles or other types of weapons. He considered that the latter only symbolised the sad failure of the so-called modern approach to the problem of human happiness. Non-violence, according to Gandhiji, was not merely complete disarmament at the military level. It was creating an atmosphere where the weakest of the weak felt that he had nothing to fear from his stronger brethren. At the base of the stock-piles was the instinct of fear and the ambition to retaliate. Gandhiji was fighting both these instincts. He was not interested in creating fear in the opponent, he was interested in removing the remotest fear in the mind of the opponent so that the brute in him did not obstruct the functioning of the humane in him. With the weapon of non-violence expressed through non-co-operation, civil disobedience and *Satyāgraha*, he could transform weakness into strength. He could, with the same weapons, revive the main springs of spirituality or emotional loyalty to human values

in his adversaries. A weak, inert-frustrated mass found itself because of this weapon converted into a dynamic army of men and women over-night. Narrow love for domestic happiness, group happiness ceased to be an obstacle to emancipation of the Indian family as a whole. Under his guidance love became an active medium to rouse a passive mass so that it could face the ordeals of a struggle — humane and noble. It became an active medium to regenerate self-confidence on the one side and self-introspection on the other. These were complementary processes. It was necessary that the spirit of confidence was revived in the Indian masses in their interest as well as in the interest of humanity at large. It was necessary that there was self-introspection among the British rulers so that they could do their duty to India humanly. The end of British imperialism marked an end of a chapter of exploitation not only in the life of the Indian people but in the life of mankind at large.

His approach to the disparities prevailing in India was also the same. The strength of his approach lay in inspiring the better side of the life of the princes. A miracle was wrought before our eyes; Indian princes surrendered their age-old principalities without a murmur. The Jamindari, was by and large abolished in the same way. He believed in the essential good nature of man and worked upon it.

Similarly Gandhiji was conscious of the great disparities on the economic front and the danger these disparities involved. He would not wait till the political revolution was over. He brought to life once again the spinning wheel. As a practical idealist he realised that for want of a better alternative, this weak instrument would still be of help to the hungry countrymen and women. He was not wedded to it. As a matter of fact, Gandhiji was not wedded to anything but truth. It was truth that made him subscribe to the spinning wheel in order to keep away the demon of semi-starvation from the houses of the poor villagers in the country. But it was not the end of the story. It was a part of his over-all plan to introduce the principle of Trusteeship in economic relationship. Again this was born of his confidence in the essential good nature of the business people. He would have struggled to bring out the better side of their life in the interest of the country they loved. This is what mattered to him the most.

The relation of Gandhiji to world community has to be understood in this wider context. The world is on the threshold of a severe racial and international crisis. One cannot do without Gandhiji in both these spheres. The fact must be acknowledged that the

intercourse between the people of the world must increase. What will be the purpose of that intercourse? Will it be competition or co-operation? If it is to be the latter then its implications have to be understood. Both nationalism and antagonisms to colour have definite implications. They are steeped in limited approaches.

With unlimited opportunities for life and unlimited opening for social intercourse, the limited approaches of nationalism and colour bar are every day proving hindrances to peace and progress. Between two crores of people brown, black, yellow and red and less than a crore white, there is an indestructible human bond. They are all honoured members of the same human family. The issue has to be faced not as an issue concerning the limited interests of a social group but as an issue pertaining to the inner harmony of the human family. Brothers should settle the same as brothers and find a solution. Gandhiji also had a problem to face. It was the problem of untouchability which was equally entrenched in social tradition. Untouchability also had the sanction of religion. But he could face it by emphasising the human bond that bound the people of India. The colour of the skin, the flesh and and bones, the human frame,—all these have importance only in the context of human life. However life has to be considered in the context of qualities which distinguish the human being from the rest of creation.

It is true that this is a far cry from the Western way of life which attracts us. Wisdom, however, demands that we lend strength to what is rational rather than what is attractive. A struggle between Gandhiji's approach and the so-called modern approach, has to be viewed in the over-all interest of human race rather than in following blind-foldedly what is tempting simply because it has the support of the elite or it is comforting. We have to go to the source if we desire to build something that has a survival value. Gandhiji's triumph lay in going to the source forgetting the temporary advantages that one could derive by subscribing to what was the result of an unbalanced view or a distorted vision of life.

It was in this sense that he cried from the bottom of his heart that while he was prepared to keep the doors and windows of a free India open to the winds of the world, he would not permit its foundations to be blown away. He felt that India was stable at the base and this stability was based upon an integrated view of life where work, life and knowledge blended into one perfect whole. He felt that caste and feudal system that had developed in India coupled with the intrusion of British commerce were the evils that had thwarted the growth of Indian life although the basis was sound and stable. It was this that led him to enter the political

arena. But his solution was not merely confined to the political ills. It was an integrated solution.

Gandhiji, as I have said, is a lighthouse, warning the world community against the limited approaches to the problems of the human race. He wanted the world community to have a re-look at the efforts it was making and see that the efforts do not prove ruinous or infructuous. He wanted the world community to satisfy itself whether its efforts were founded on stable rock.

This man was not an ordinary man as his life and death proved. I may revert again to Einstein, the father of the Nuclear Era, who at the moment of Gandhiji's death gave a tribute that should be remembered by all who believe in science and technology and end with a plea to the intelligent and rational in India to have a re-look at the efforts they are making and/or supporting. Perhaps on a review they will find that Gandhiji was not so irrelevant as at first sight he appears to be and the modern approaches, are not so rational, basically speaking, as they appear to be.

M. M. Bhatt

GANDHIJI AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION

Gandhiji's Nationalism

Gandhiji's nationalism, though fiercely genuine was not exclusive. It was an all-embracing canopy which had under it the good of all beings. He says "I want to realise brotherhood or identity not merely with the beings called human, but I want to realise identity with all life, even with such things as crawl upon earth . . . . because we claim descent from the same God and that being so, all life in whatever form it appears must be essentially one".[1]

For Gandhiji, patriotism was the same as humanity. He would not hurt any other country for the sake of India. To him the world was one family. ("*Vasudhaiva kutumbakam*"). Gandhiji's patriotism included not merely the welfare of India but that of the entire world. In fact he believed in co-existence which was later on adumbrated by leaders under the name '*panca śīla*' But he used to emphasise the point that it was impossible for a person to be an internationalist without being a nationalist. He writes: "Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact i.e., when peoples belonging to different countries have organised themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil, it is the narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of modern nations which is evil. Indian nationalism has, I hope, struck a different path. It was to organise itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large. Anyway there is no uncertainty about my patriotism or nationalism".[2]

Racial hatred

Gandhiji denounced race hatred in any form. He believed in the great teaching "Hate the deed, but not the doer". He believed

in the collective good. His faith in this classic statement was unshakable; "the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province and the province for the country, even so a country has to be free in order that it may die if necessary, for the benefit of the world."[3]

Linguistic Provinces

Gandhiji is of the opinion that provincialism of a healthy type there is and always will be. Each province should have its individuality and special characteristic. Otherwise there is no need to have provinces. To quote Gandhiji again: "Our provincialism must never be narrow or exclusive. It should be conducive to the interest of the whole country of which the provinces are but parts. They might be linked to the tributaries of a mighty river. The tributaries promote its mightiness. Their strength and purity will be reflected in the majestic stream. It must be thus with the provinces. Everything that the provinces do must be for the glory of the whole. If the great contribution of Rabindranath glorifies Bengal, it glorifies also India. Does not his influence pervade the whole of India? Dadabhai lived not merely for the Parsis, not merely for Bomaby, but for the whole of India......... There is no room for exclusiveness or jealousy between province and province, unless India is to be dismembered into warring countries, each living for itself and if possible, at the expense of the rest. Every attempt at dividing India into water-tight compartments must be resisted. India's destiny is to become a strong, independent nation, making her unique contribution to the world's progress."[4] This was the vision of Gandhiji's India. This was his prescription for the ills of narrow provincialism.

Outsiders

Immediately after we attained our Independence, Gandhiji prescribed the following code of conduct so that we may preserve our hard-earned freedom and achieve national solidarity. "An individual from one province may emigrate to another province with all freedom but he must not do so to oust the natives of the province. A non-native of a province who settles in the province must do so to serve the province, not to exploit it. Popular Governments are to be vigilent to see that there is no irregularity or encroachment by persons from other provinces. At the same time they are obliged to give all the comers from outside their provinces. But there is a fundamental obligation on the part of

the immigrants. They should identify themselves with the natives of the province and harmonious blending should be the resultant".[5]

But what does Gandhiji see? He is sad at the turn of events. He writes: "The Provincial spirit seems to be infecting the provinces. Thus some Assamese think that Assam belongs exclusively to the Assamese. If that spirit fired every province, to whom could India belong? I hold that the people of all the provinces belong to India and India belongs to all. The only condition is that no one could go and settle in another province to exploit it or rule it or to injure its interests in any way."[6]

National Unity

What has Gandhiji to say about our national unity? Will not his opinion help us to solve the much-vexed problem of today, the problem of national integration?

His considered but simple answer was that "(unity) consists in our having a common purpose, a common goal and common sorrows".[7] This is no remark of a fire-eater. It is an experience gained by the Father of the Nation after serving humanity for years in South Africa and India. In 1920 (when we were still under British rule and division of India had not taken place), he further said: "The union that we want is not a patched up thing, but a union of hearts based upon a definite recognition of the indubitable proposition that 'swaraj' for India must be a partnership between equals, each respecting the religion of the other".[8] This great statement is of permanent value and the beacon light that can guide us at all times. We may go with Gandhiji and add a small phrase and restate that, it must be a partnership between equals, each respecting the religion of the other and each respecting the language of the other. Then there may not be the so-called second class citizenship to any son or daughter of India. Gandhi was much pained at our disunity at crucial contexts. He bursts out " we may think we are living but disunited we are worse than dead."

Gandhiji had infinite faith in God and true love. He hoped to see real unity established in India between not only Hindus and Muslims but all the communities that make India a nation. He experimented all through even after the partition of India, towards that end - the union of hearts. His *itineries* not only in India but parts of Pakistan like Naokali in East Bengal are only translations of his great ideal into practice. He affirms: I have not a shadow of a doubt that our hearts will meet some day. What seems

impossible today for us, God will make possible tomorrow. For that day I work, live and pray."[9] Has his life of prayer and dedication been of any avail to us? Don't we have a lesson from him?

Gandhiji calls it a matter of shame that we are a house divided against itself. According to him people fly at each other's throats in cowardice and fear. He wonders that we should be afraid of our own shadows. All Indians, whether they be Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Christian, Jain or Sikh are equally the children of Mother India and are therefore brothers, united together with a bond stronger than that of blood. Gandhiji feels unhappy that people who have lived together as good neighbours for centuries, who are born in the same land, who are nourished by the same soil and are destined to be returned as dust to the same soil should look at each other with suspicion and regard each other as enemies. The remedy for injustice, if any, is to reason together or refer the dispute to arbitration in the last resort, if mutual discussion fails.[10]

Gandhiji states that India has many religions (shall we add many languages) but only one nationality and this I dare to say, in spite of two divisions.[11] He further asserts "All of us are Indians first and last, wherever we live and to whatever creed or class or province we belong. Religion is entirely a personal matter. Each one can approach his Creator as he likes".[12]

New India of Gandhiji's dream

Gandhiji wanted all — Hindus and Muslims — to live together as common citizens. If any one of them still swears by the past, it would not help but hinder us in our forward march. Gandhiji used to say: "If a minority in India, minority on the score of its religious profession, is made to feel small on that account I can only say that this India is not the India of my dreams". According to Gandhiji the minorities must be made to feel that they are as much valued citizens of the State they live in, as the majority. Perhaps we may have to add to this another group of minorities —the linguistic minorities which Gandhiji might not have envisaged.

Gandhiji always stressed the fact that all rights flow from duties previously and duly performed. He warned incessantly leaders not to run after power. He did not want nationalists to mix religion with politics. "We are Indians first and last in all secular matters. Religion is a personal matter of the individual concerned".[13] In another context Gandhiji states "If officers of the Government as well as members of the public undertake responsibility and work wholeheartedly for the creation of a secular state, then only we can build a New India that would be the glory of India".[14]

Warning

Painfully Gandhiji gave a warning on the eve of the partition. "India is a vast country, rich in minerals, metals, and spices. There is nothing in the world that India does not produce. If we kept on quarrelling, any of the big powers of the world would feel tempted to come and take India from Indians and at the same time exploit her rich resources."[15]

Through mutual affection and goodwill Gandhiji desired that a New India should be built. He lived on the cardinal principles of hope, faith and affection. Truth and Non-violence were his powerful weapons. He wielded them honestly and effectively for the glory of our country. He had no doubt about the unity or integration of India. Anything other than that was against Nature. "Nature will force them to live in peace, if they do not come together voluntarily". That was his firm conviction.

1. *Young India*,. 4-4-1929.
2. *Young India*, 18-6-1965.
3. *Harijan*, 1-2-1948.
4. *Harijan*, 22-7-1939.
5. *Harijan*, 21-9-1947.
6. *Harijan*, 7-9-1947.
7. *Young India*, 25-2-1960.
8. *Young India*, 6-10-1920.
9. *Harijan*, 7-10-1939.
10. *Harijan*, 8-9-1946.
11. *Harijan*, 3-8-1947.
12. *Harijan*, 27-7-1947.
13. *Harijan*, 18-1-1948.
14. *Harijan*, 31-8-1947.
15. *Harijan*, 17-11-1946.

K. Chandrasekharan

GANDHI AND TAGORE

Mahatma Gandhi and Gurudev Tagore were the kindred spirits for our regeneration. They "represented the two poles of India's psyche — the aesthetic and the ascetic"[1] commented Pyare Lal. But even as the poles they have their vital similarities. It is nothing uncommon to those familiar with India's past to find the *ṛṣi* and the *kavi* identified in the same person. The *Gītā* is significant when it speaks of the Primal Cause as *kavim purāṇam anuśāsitāram* (ancient poet and arch-disciplinarian).[2] If the two were totally different in their externals, they were possessed of the same spiritual fire and the same humanitarian sympathies. Though Tagore was essentially a poet, he was more than that, a seer in the valid sense, as Gandhiji was more than a politician and patriot, a mystic and a sage in their authentic roles.

Contemporaries as they were, they were strikingly original and revolutionaries in their thought. They were able to guide and direct the unleashed forces in the country which otherwise would have run amuck in the first flush of nationalism and proved more destructive than creative. It is needless to recount the contribution of Gandhiji to the shaping of our destiny in winning freedom. Tagore's influence, on the other hand was 'subtler and deeper'; for it was capable of feeding the potentialities in the race for creative activity in spheres beyond the scope of politicians.

Because of certain divergent views which they were freely exchanging, the conutry at large mistook them as opposites in outlook and approach to problems agitating the country during their times. But people who were near them, and others who could discern in their expressions and writings what mutual respect and affection they had, never once doubted the highest bond that tied them together. The poet could assess Gandhiji thus: "When Mahatma

Gandhiji came and opened up the path of freedom for India, he had no obvious medium of power in his hand, no overwhelming authority of coercion. The influence which emanated from his personality was great because of its revelation of a spontaneous self-giving."[3]

Gandhiji was no less appreciative of the other when he observed on the poet's seventieth birthday: "I owe much to one who by his poetic genius and singular purity of life has raised India in the estimation of the world." To those who might not be satisfied with the avowels of mutual regard by them and still imagine that there was a gulf separating the two, Gandhiji's one statement would be enough to prove the contrary and set the seal of finality on such speculations. After the poet's death when Gandhiji visited *Santi Niketan* in 1945, he confessed: "I started with a disposition to detect a conflict between Gurudev and myself, but ended with the glorious discovery that there was none."[4]

Nevertheless there was in fact something to create a suspicion of conflict. It is perhaps too well-known how they differed in their approaches to the problem of the methods for winning freedom for the country. The launching of the non-cooperation and civil disobedience movements did not receive Tagore's approval. So also the efficacy of spinning with the Charka and thereby removing the economic backwardness of the country did not much attract him. Although Tagore admired the practical leader's doctrines and the ardent fire of his spirit of self-sacrifice, he could hardly reconcile himself to the element of negation contained in the non-cooperation principle. He had an instinctive aversion to everything that stood for a 'no'.

But Gandhiji was not without a robust philosophy to sustain his action. According to him the art of elimination was as essential as acceptance; weeding as necessary as sowing. Progress involved a combination of the two processes. Tagore's poetic contemplation of life as a whole would not permit of any mutilation of it on the score of any particular endeavour or set goal. Life has to be full; and things, unless accepted as they are, will not produce harmony in the soul of man. All creation was to him filled with rhythms which never cease their wholesome functioning. Hence, he was not for any break in the ceaseless flow of rhythmic life. Some of the acts of violence that followed as a reaction to the Government's repressive measures to control the political situation, hurt Tagore so much that he openly came out with his criticisms of Gandhiji's philosophy of non-violence. His protest assumed the shape of a closely argued out thesis in the *Modern*

Review under the caption: 'An Appeal To Truth'. He began with a tribute to the singleness of Gandhiji's devotion to the cause of the country's emancipation, but as he proceeded the tone changed and he became critical of the methods adopted by him. No doubt he was for no slur being cast on Gandhiji's personal motives; still he feared the Gandhites. Again, he was against the blind following and devotion to a single person's influence. He remarked: "Everywhere I was told that creative and reasoning power should abdicate and blind obedience only reign. So simple it is to crush in the name of some outward liberty, the real freedom of the soul."

His high conception of the dignity of Man gave no room for adoption of anything which would ultimately impair it. Reposing of absolute faith by a large section of the people in acts not calculated to help them in freedom of thinking sounded the death-knell to all hopes of survival of the human personality. Moreover, he was feeling the Mahatma was burdening himself with too great a responsibility for a single shoulder to bear. More than all, his international outlook counselled him against any narrow form of nationalism. The world over, he felt, men with the spirit of the new age were seeking to liberate themselves from the shackles of a circumscribed patriotism. In such a context, India should rise from the torpor of negation and strive for Swaraj only on the basis of a spirit of harmony.

Mahatmaji, replied to it, in spirited language. It is a document of Gandhiji's principles nearest his heart. Service to humanity at any cost was a basic doctrine of his. So his words made no mincing of matters: "When all about me are dying for want of food, the only occupation permissible for me is to feed the hungry ...... The poet lives for the morrow, and would have us do like-wise. He presents to our admiring gaze the beautiful picture of the birds in the early morning singing hymns of praise as they soar into the sky. Those birds had their day's food and soared with rested wings in whose veins new blood had flown the previous night. But I have had the pain of watching birds who for want of strength could not be coaxed even into a flutter of their wings. The human bird under the Indian sky gets up weaker than when he pretended to retire. For millions it is an eternal vigil or an eternal trance. I have found it impossible to soothe suffering patients with a song from Kabir."

Gandhiji's unusually stinging language can picture to us how much deeply his heart should have been melting in sympathy

with the suffering masses of the country. He gave the title to the article as 'The Great Sentinel,' recognising the responsible attitude of the poet. The exchange of views between the two became soon the subject of heated arguments among the followers of both. But calmer reflection will certainly aid us in concluding that if there were strong opinions expressed by both against each other, they none the less revealed their anxieties on behalf of others only. There was little of personal rancour colouring their opinions. The poet never tried to prolong the controversy; he retired to his own shell with the words: "If you can't march in step with your compatriots in the greatest crisis of their history, beware of saying they are in the wrong, and you are in the right. But give up your place in the ranks, go back to your poet's corner, and be prepared to meet with ridicule and public disgrace." This was written in 1921, on March 5th. The country was then in the grip of a new phase of political agitation, the like of which had not been witnessed previously. Boycott of courts by legal practitioners, of schools and colleges by students, burning of foreign cloth and wearing of *khadi* by all who believed in the new method of agitation, and the dislocation of administrative work due to non-violent non-cooperation of erstwhile loyal servants of the crown—all followed in unbelievable sequence. Gandhiji's entire philosophy of action was based on *Satyāgraha* and *ahimsā*. However much Tagore deplored the aggressive example of intellectual nationalism as evinced by the followers of the Mahatma and despaired of the freedom which culture due to contacts with others would be able to produce, Mahatmaji coolly met the words by his statement: "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows stuffed. I want the culture of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any of them ......" Evidently he was answering the poet's deeper concern regarding the spirit of exclusiveness that might be generated by too much of the non-cooperation tendency and the carrying to excesses of the doctrine by the followers of the Mahatma.

Pausing here for a moment, let us try to find out whether Tagore really was against any open non-violent agitation as such. If his own plays written earlier could be scanned with purpose, there are clear evidences to prove how there was even a keen anticipation by the poet of a political fighter in whose hands a weapon similar to the one Gandhiji wielded in his *Satyāgraha* campaign was shown to be effective. Dhananjaya, an ascetic, introduced in two of his plays ***Prāyaśçitta*** (Atonement) and ***Muktadhārā*** (Free current), successfully demonstrates the efficacy of a

no-tax campaign set up by him by way of protest against the unjust acts of a king. *Prāyaśictta* was a play written in 1909, and *Mukta-Dhārā* though written in 1921, chronologically was before the actual determination by Gandhiji to start the Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience movements. It will be found that the ascetic Dhananjaya speaks a language almost to the same effect to his followers as Gandhiji's to the non-cooperators. Let us hear him: "As soon as you hold up your head and say, it does not hurt, the roots of violence will be cut ...... Nothing can hurt your true manhood, for that is a flame of fire. The animal that is flesh feels the blow and whines." The play which was scheduled to be enacted was dropped because in the meanwhile Gandhiji's incarceration after trial took place.

A striking resemblance of experience holds both the poet and the practical leader from viewing art as anything apart from Truth. Gandhiji too for all outward appearances was one who was not allowing himself to be drawn by fancies and dreams. It was even believed he was not attracted to the fine arts in the way a connoisseur generally responds. But once we begin to enter into Gandhiji's understanding of beauty as only truth, then all doubts concerning his appreciations of art get dissolved and we are prepared to regard him as having plucked the heart out of the matter.

He was once questioned as to his real views upon art, because of the impression created by him that "consciously or unconsciously he had ruled out of the scheme of national regeneration all considerations of art". His answer came straight, and sufficiently disabuses us of the slightest suspicion for entertaining any further misunderstanding. He said: "The outward has no meaning except in so far as it helps the inward. All fine art is thus the expression of the soul." He then elaborated his view and added finally: "What conscious Art of man can give me the panoramic scenes that open out before me when I look up to the sky above with all its shining stars? ...... These productions of man's art have their value only in so far as they help the soul inward, towards realisation."[5] It is clear how much Gandhi's personal experiences of art were not different from what aestheticians from the earliest times in our country have held as the sole aim of all art: beauty is not the end but only the means to Realisation.

Tagore, a born poet, gave expression on many an occasion to almost the same sentiments. Discussing art, he had occasion to observe: "A real artist must be a seeker of truth, an ascetic." "Whenever beauty attains perfection it discards all superfluity."

"Beauty can never be truly realised in all its purity unless it is viewed apart from sensual desires."[6] Who was really more poetic of the two? It is difficult to say. Except that the one gave expression of his personality in music and pictures and the other in withdrawing himself in his realisation of truth from the language of art, their views coincided in considering art as a complete expression of the soul or Truth.

In the matter of education, both Gandhiji and Gurudev were conceiving of totally comprehensive ideals for our youth. They were, each in his own way, revolutionary in their ideas. Tagore from the outset, that is, even as early as 1905, was strongly of the conviction that book-fed knowledge, as was everywhere imparted, was not conducive to the development of personality in the child. The limited scope which a textbook gives for the mind to travel, unlike what can be gained by a free roaming by oneself in nature and in healthy surroundings, was abhorred by him. In many a talk of his and also by a screaming satire that he wrote, entitled *The Parrot's Training*, he tried to instil in the minds of people of the colossal waste of a mere class-room education; the vast rich life spread before one provided him opportunity to gather knowledge with freedom and sympathy through his own experience. With the help of literature, festive ceremonies and religious teachings he tried to develop in the children of his school (*Santi Niketan*) their feeling for Nature as also a sensitiveness to other human surroundings. Among subjects he wanted them to learn under the shade of trees and in open air, were music and painting. They had also their own dramatic performances and their share in play-production, stage-setting, etc. He enabled the students to feel in their studies no strenuousness because of the holiday-spirit infused into them, when it took shape in activities connected with their kitchens, their vegetable gardens and their weaving work as also their attending to small repairs etc. in their school. Because of the fact that their class work was not separated from their normal activities and formed part of their daily current of life, it became harmoniously blended with everything else in its own outward flow.

Gandhiji too made his experiments in educational system, and contributed no less to the ideal of making one fit for life after leaving school. Proper education and training were essential in his estimation for any one who had to fit himself into the new social order he was preparing the country for. The entrants to schools should have the high ideal of becoming human instrument of love in action, without fear or hatred. The need for a fresh

outlook on education was therefore emphasised by him. Every effort should be made to make the boy and girl get equipped for a new social order which was being created.

Nai Talim was the name given by him to the educational system conceived by him. Education in the first place, should have the main objective of a new society, based on non-violent sanctions and should also indicate clearly and precisely the methods on achieving such an objective. Such a training of the mind must start in the early years of a person and continue throughout life. Education should be such as would draw out one's hidden talents and sustain the student in his effort to live in harmony with others. In furtherance of such a harmonious blending of inherent abilities with a fresh outlook, the intellect alone should not be trained but also the body. A life-centred system, instead of a mere book-centred knowledge, was aimed at. Work and study together in a regulated manner, suited to the aptitude and capacity of the growing child, should be made part of the curriculum. Apart from work devoted to making useful things, the aim of *Nai Talim* was to lead to the development of the human personality. Learning, natural environment and society, all the three are to be of equal importance in the scheme of one's steady growth. In order to train the student's mind in cooperative effort and public spirit, every school should have a parliament, and its chosen ministers were to look after sanitation, health, and all other types of discipline for a homogeneous organisation to flourish. Examinations should be replaced by continuous assessments of achievements of boys and girls throughout the year. The school must be closely linked with the community and vice versa.

It is necessary to remember that Tagore had also the same idea of linking work with study, and hence his founding of *Sri Niketan* close by the school of *Santi Niketan* ensured the same objective. The nearness of the village atmosphere proved an incentive for work with the hand. Study and physical work were together contributing to the ideal conceived by him. Rural reconstruction found its typical centre in *Sri Niketan*, with its number of occupational resources for skilled handicraft. His comprehensive programme of school activity naturally supplied the needed scope for the development of arts and crafts as also intellectual achievements.

Thus in their educational ideals both Gandhiji and Tagore stressed the importance of the development of personality through a combination of intellectual and physical efforts as a desideratum

for life's fruitful journey. To go into more details of the systems would be beyond the scope of this paper, intended to bring out also other points of similarity between the two master-spirits of our age.

Before we actually deal with their wider amplitude of service embracing the entire humanity, let us peep into the beginnings of their acquaintanceship with each other. Their common link was Rev. Charles Andrews, who along with the other co-worker W. W. Pearson had met Gandhiji in South Africa after staying in *Santi Niketan* with the poet in 1913. During his conversations with Gandhiji, he had occasion to refer to Gurudev and his model institution of *Santi Niketan.* So before Gandhiji arrived in India in 1915, from South Africa, he had the necessity to seek shelter for some of his disbanded Phoenix settlement boys, on their return to India, in *Santi Niketan.* His boys preceded even Gandhiji's arrival at the school, where during the absence of the poet on the earliest occasion, Baro Dada, as the poet's elder brother Dwijendranath Tagore was endearingly called, was present to receive him. The poet's elder brother was prophetic enough to tell his younger brother afterwards: "Ravi, you do not understand: This man will deliver India."[7]

For six days Gandhiji stayed with Tagore, and found the work of the poet in the educational field satisfying. Of course he was critical too in charging the poet with not making the inmates of the place self-relying in their physical efforts instead of depending upon hired labour. Also in the matter of interdining he felt there was need for reform. Otherwise, Gandhiji was taken up with the prayer songs which were sung as well as the spiritual atmosphere produced when dance and drama inculcated into the boys and girls a thorough Indianness of spirit in the presentation of the arts.

Everybody familiar with Gandhiji's fasts, knows full well, how, on the eve of his decision to take upon himself a fast for the cancellation of the Communal Award in 1932, he sought of the poet for his blessings and how when he broke the fast, Tagore was by his side to sing a song from the *Gītānjali* :

> " When the heart is hard and parched up
> Come upon me with the shower of mercy;
>
> When grace is lost from life, come with
> A burst of song."

Even later when Gandhiji set out on his Naokhali march in 1946, he started only after the singing of a song from the golden treasury of Tagore's beginning with the words:

"Walk alone
If they answer not to thy call, Walk alone."

Both these rare symbols of Indian thought and its revival, never entertained anything less than the Universal in their heart of hearts. Tagore from the early years of his, was for Man's dignity and wholeness maintained at any cost. His stress on the universality of comprehension was reiterated in both song and speech, and his desire to make man the sole instrument of God's own labours here below are too well-known to need recapitulation.

Gandhiji believed equally in the oneness of all for he was never tired of saying: "For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive. I will not hurt England or Germany to serve India ...... I believe in the essential dignity of man, and for that matter, of *all that lives*. Therefore I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him, and if one man fails, the whole world fails with him." It is the seat of his soul force and shows how in his activities he never wavered in the clear perception of his goal. To call him a mere nationalist is to betray an ignorance too deep for words. If Gandhiji's word and deed breathed of an Advaitic attitude to the core, Tagore's prime care was also not to encourage the Westerner's conception of patriotism. His thorough condemnation of the spirit of nationalism arose because of the perpetuation by the Western powers of so many wrongs upon others for the sake of one's own country's glorification. He emphasised not once but many times his cherished dream: 'My aspiration for my country is that the mind of India must join its own forces to the great movement of mind, which is in the present-day world. Every success that we may attain in this effort will at once lead us directly to feel the unity of Man."[8]

The two statements speak for themselves how they both rose above all minor considerations of "My Country and My People" and believed only in the universality of man's higher destiny.

Alike with Gandhiji, Tagore's feeling of the living presence of God gave him a unique position as one of the beacon lights showing the spiritual way for a better world. While Gandhiji was direct of expression, and the simplicity of his language possessed an epic beauty and purity, Tagore's heart flowed in play, song and fiction, yet retaining a perfect unity of vision. Both held Truth as the one shining, unfailing, light which must be sought through ever so constricting a pathway of difficulty and in ever so gathering gloom of

disappointment. High natives feel nothing as redounding to personal glory. Innate humility placed the two much above the rest and much nearer their own Maker. The Mahatma often said: 'It is wrong to call me an ascetic. The ideals that regulate my life are presented for acceptance by mankind in general. I have arrived at them by gradual evolution." This inspiring freedom from self-obsession is only matched by the Poet's disarming out-spokenness. After the *Gitānjali* in English translation had won the Nobel Prize, in self-assessment he said: "That I cannot write English is such a patent fact that I never had even the vanity to feel ashamed of it."[9]

God was not anywhere else for them; He existed as visibly to them as any other object that their eyes rested upon. The Mahatma always said, " I am surer of His existence than the fact that you and I are sitting in this room! " The Poet always sang: " Life of my life, I shall try to keep my body pure, knowing that thy living touch is upon all my limbs. " Do we need then to doubt that these two constitute the landmarks of our true culture and civilization? They are among the chosen few, 'whose acquaintance is beyond price.'

1. Pyarelal: *Mahatma Gandhi — The Last Phase*, p. 160.
2. Gītā: VIII, 9.
3. S. Radhakrishnan (Edt.): *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 282.
4. K. R. Kripalani: *Rabindranath Tagore: A Biography*, p. 322.
5. *To The Students*, (Hingoranis: Gandhi Series), p. 3.
6. Rabindranath Tagore on *Art and Aesthetics* (Selection of Essays), pp. 3, 6.
7. K. R. Kripalani: *Rabindranath Tagore: A Biography*, p. 246.
8. Rabindranath Tagore: *Letters from Abroad*, p. 151.
9. K. R. Kripalani: *Rabindranath Tagore: A Biography*, p. 249.

S. E. Demetrian

TRUTH IN GANDHI'S THOUGHT

Truth and non-violence are aptly considered to be the twin principles of the great heritage the Mahatma left in our care. Rarely in the history of humanity a man was able to embody to such an extent his convictions and live with them and through them an extremely active life comparable in all respects with the lives of the philosopher-kings of Indian mythology or antiquity but also of the mythology and antiquity of other peoples. If it be to define Hinduism, he so patiently interpreted as "search after Truth with non-violent means," briefly, to give a definition valuable at least for the first half of our century, I am stressing, for I don't want to do injustice to other great Indians nor to Hinduism as such, that at closer study may be more than the Gandhian definition, most probably a word could do ... "Gandhi". For us still, in the second half of the same century, Hinduism equals Gandhi for all his life has been but a "search after Truth with non-violent means."

His conception of life is not difficult to be grasped for he lived it thoroughly; he has been truthful to himself. "He spoke according to his thoughts, He did according to his words." His life has been an open book from where every one could draw plenty of examples.

Considering the above mentioned twin principles, as defined by Gandhi, it is clear that *ahimsā*, non-violence, his equivalent to moral Law in this context, has always been taken by him to be the mean or the water-way for attaining the patio, the interior garden of the Truth, that although hidden by the walls of the house makes possible the life of all living in the house by the fragrance and the pure air it maintains.

The primordial importance he gave to Truth is not to be seen only from the definition he gave of Hinduism but from many of his statements that justify his image as a seeker and make us understand better that his life has been really 'the story of' his 'experiments with Truth' and assertions like the following become very important when we aim at a fuller grasp of Gandhi's inner life :

"I am a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found a way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, i.e. to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations."[1]

Although we find also, scattered here and there, paragraphs like this, all in his inimitable style:

> "*Ahimsā* is my God, and Truth is my God
>
> When I look for *ahimsā*, Truth says, 'Find it through me'.
>
> When I look for Truth, *Ahimsā* says, 'Find it through me'."[2]

These statements seem to be meant to stress the quality of *ahismā* being a tool for bringing the Truth out, with the view of making it clear and shining.

Comparing the two types of excerpts one may be lead to the observation that, with Gandhi also, truth may have two clear meanings the Truth as Absolute or the Truth as end to which one could apply, statements like the first and the truth as mean, the relative truth of the moral life to be considered together with *ahimsā* the instrument for reaching or at least for coming as near as possible to the Absolute.

In the sequel we shall try to analyse the content of the concept of relative truth or truth as mean, as understood by Gandhi, and also the concept of Truth as scope; then we shall try to find out if there is some connection between the two aspects.

The relative truth or the moral truth, the second principle of the "ten Hindu commandments", as professor Hiriyanna puts it, means "Relating the facts as they are", i.e., truth in thought word and deed. The very fact of dealing with

thought word and deed shows that there is a limited type of truth; it is to be added also that even this relative truth is not to be expressed when you feel that its uttering could do some harm to others. This type of truth, always under the sway of the more important *āhmisa* although bearing the same name as the other *satya,* that means "what comes from existence, or what is of the nature of the existence", could not be better pointed out as what comes out from truthfulness.

Although limited for its outcome, the relative truth of the moral law, truthfulness, is an essential requirement for a further step and it stands for what may be called a moral temperament. It seems that the child Gandhi was gifted with truthfulness and was always sensitive to truth even before being sensitive to the necessity of non-violence. The very first reflection regarding his inner evolution is in connection with this problem. He speaks about his early childhood. "I do not remember having ever told a lie . . . either to my teachers or to my school-mates."[3] It is right, generally children learn how to lie from the others, especially from the grown-ups; just on the same page of the autobiography is the story of his teacher who, during the visit to his class-room of the Educational Inspector, wanted to prompt the young Gandhi to copy the spelling of a word from the neighbour's slate. Gandhi writes: "It was beyond me to see that he wanted me to copy the spelling . . . for I was thinking that the teacher was there to supervise us against copying. The result was that all the boys except myself, were found to have spelt every word correctly. Only I had been stupid. The teacher tried later to bring this stupidity home to me, but without effect. I never could learn the art of 'copying'.

At about the same age Gandhi narrates the incident of the two plays: the first on Shravana's devotion to his blind parents, from *Rāmāyaṇa,* and the play on the story of Hariścandra, from the *Purāṇa.* Gandhi says: "This play —*Hariścandra*–captured my heart. I could never be tired of seeing it. But how often should I be permitted to go to it haunted me and I must have acted Harischandra to myself times without number. 'Why should all not be truthful like Hariścandra?' was the question I asked myself day and night. To follow truth and to go through all the ordeals Hariścandra went through was the one idea it inspired in me. I literally believed in the story of Hariścandra. The thought of it all often made me weep. My commonsense tells me today that Hariścandra could not have been a historical character.'[4]

Possible that Hariścandra was not an historical character, possible also that a very similar character in the old Testament of the Bible was not an historical personage; but this only shows that people have some basic moral values everywhere. It may be added that the great German poet W. Goethe in his autobiography *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (Poetry and Truth) narrates some similar instances as the above mentioned excerpt from Gandhi's autobiography commenting on them something like this "what you intensely wish being young you get in your older years". Goethe experienced this thing in many instances. Comparing now the story of Hariścandra with Gandhi's life one can consider it a motto for Gandhi's struggle to live according to truth. Truth seems to be a luxury, a highly expensive one and it is only the lot of the strongest to pay the price that may go up till the actual sacrifice of life; but it seems that truth deserves all the sacrifices and we would have to believe the ones that claim to have reached it; truth deserves even much more.

Slowly with the passing by of years Gandhi came to formulate in obvious terms his reply on the fundamental question 'What is truth?' And the reply is double for he answers in one way while considering the relative truth and in another while pondering over the Absolute Truth.

As regards the first type Gandhi takes as valuable 'what the inner voice tells you' but immediately he is putting to himself the question of 'why do different people think of different and contrary truths?' His explanation is that the differences are due to the differences in moral training; he emphasises the necessity of the conscious taking of moral vows, i.e., truth, purity, non-violence, poverty, non-possesion etc. That means that those who want to know what is true, with the aim of developing the inner vioce, (a reality even more difficult to define), must cling to truth. So the problem of how to get fit for training is not made clear by Gandhi; from this we must conclude that he was presupposing the sensitiveness to the value, the positive one, of truth. This sensitiveness seems to be more a gift that has been received somehow together with others at the moment or before the man is born. It is not explainable why, for instance, from a whole class only he was the 'stupid', being not able to understand lying; how only he among his mates, was overwhelmed in such an impressive and long ranging way by the above mentioned plays. From common experience we all know that we feel ill when we are about to lie or happy and relieved when the pressure of non-truth is no more over us.

The problem of the definition of the moral or relative truth is even more complicated by the historical well-known and accepted reality of the phenomenon of the shifting of the moral values during the ages. And this leads us to the question of why men feel need the ages.. And this leads us to question the 'why do men feel the need to change the sets of moral values?' and naturally to the problem, of the ones that are able to impress on others, mostly by recasting in new moulds ancient realities, othe sets of mostly by recasting in new moulds ancient realities, of the sets of all these rather theoretical issues, but he was first of all a man of practice; he had to strengthen the norm by his practical example. And words are of less use in this respect. Only the sovereign test of practice is to be resorted to.

The weakness of the relative truth is due to the fact that even for the purposes of the practical life moral principles cannot live as suspended in the air; every one may ask. 'What is the use?' or 'What comes next?' But even ideals lake *ahimsā* may leave people dissatisfied. That is why Gandhi, feeling the limits of the explanations regarding the relative truth or the truth as means, was always trying to make men raise their eyes and look for a higher ideal. So doing he was on the same line with the spiritual tradition of both eastern and western culture, I would better say, of human culture, for, the terms east and west are highly relative and they are losing more and more their importance. The content Gandhi gave to the above-mentioned higher ideal was the realisation of the Truth as such or of the Absolute.

Now, and here we are touching our second point, we are in a better position to see what Gandhi understood by the term Truth. The shortest definition of his conclusions till he became sixty years old has been expressed by himself: "God is Truth". Then what is God? For Gandhi God is Love and Happiness, Conscience, The Law-maker, the Unalterable Law and the Executor; He is Orderliness and Fearlessness; He is the Source of Light and Life, the 'indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything', the unseen Power residing within us and many other things, but yet He is above and beyond all these.

After his sixties, at a meeting in Switzerland, (the report of which has been published)[5] in answering the question why he considered that God is Truth, Gandhi, after expressing his acceptance of the nameless and formless characteristic of God but also accepting the numemrous names of God says: "... But deep down in me I used to say that though God may be love, God is Truth, above

all. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description of God, I have come to the conclusion that for myself, God is truth. But two years ago, that could have been about 1929, I went a step further and said that Truth is God. And I came to that conclusion after a continuous and relentless search after truth which began nearly fifty years ago".

This latter position 'Truth is God' for shadowed statements like 'He—that is God—'is even the atheism in the atheist' (1925) is based on the pertinent observation that the necessity for truth and the respect for what is to be considered true is a general feature with every human being although the degrees and the contents given to the concept may vary considerably; this necessity is so specific to the human race, we may add, that even when people are doing wrong things the first care is to put a mask of truthfulness whether they are acting individually or as organized societies. It is clear that when Gandhi is speaking of the 'Passion of discovering the truth in the atheist' and of the necessity or power of truth' with the atheist he is thinking of the relative moral truth.

We have reached our third point, that of the connection between what we have called relative moral truth, the mean, and Truth, the other name given by Gandhi to God, as scope. Is there some essential difference between the two conceptions of the word 'truth'? Hardly any. Gandhi is quite clear: "God is ethics and morality"[6] or "...I believe ultimately that means and end are convertible terms ..." speaking on *ahimsā* (non-violence) as means for reaching God. The statement fits for truth as means also. And Gandhi is right, there is no basic difference between the moral relative truth and Truth as God. The apparent difference still existing is a difference for working purposes-that is for the necessities of the initial stages it may be commendable to consider moral truth as separate from Truth as scope. The number of examples in the history of culture of the moral truth as established by the Gods or by their messengers shows only that for some stages there is necessity to stress the difference between mean and scope.

At this stage, having a more or less complete view of the conception of Truth in Gandhi's thought one may ask oneself if his definition "Truth is God" is the highest and if he was or not considering the two terms of the definition as equivalent with the Absolute.

"Truth is God" is rather a limiting definition: both its terms are strongly qualified. The content of the first term, 'Truth,' is

to draw the necessity or the power of truth as specific to the human race and present even in the 'atheist heart; it is futile to stress that this necessity is variable, and although still existing, it may be so much compressed by contrary tendencies as to the point of practically not having any value. So the first concept is relative. Let us take the second, the concept of God; this concept is still limited, for it starts with Truth in the definition "God is 'Truth" '. As regards the definition "Truth is God" it has been already stated that Gandhi tries here and there to enumerate the qualities of God. How can one "describe" the ultimate Reality by qualities? And how can one get rid of qualities by saying merely that they are infinite in number; adding number to number one can't help getting more and more entangled in multiplicity.

As a matter of fact Gandhi seems to have been conscious of the limitations of even his last definition of Truth. For instance referring to his spiritual experience he says at the end of his autobiography: "The little fleeting glimpses, therefore, I have been having of Truth hardly convey idea of the indescribable lustre of Truth ... " and then he is speaking of the "Universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth' ... " a rare expression indeed in his writing?. Then he is speaking of God that " ... simply is to those who have faith."[8] Pledging himself as an "Advaitin" he speaks of *Brahman* in *Upanisadic* terms as indescribable, concluding "He or It is;"[9] and finally "God is nameless."[10]

Had Gandhi lived more perhaps he would have taken the conclusive step by renouncing duality altogether for the sake of the ever-existing non-dual reality and realising the true significance of *satya* in all its majesty.

1. *Young India*, 17-11-1921.
2. *Ibid.*, 4-6-1925.
3. *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, p. 5.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
5. 31-12-1931.
6. *Young India*, 5-3-1925.
7. *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, p. 370.
8. *Young India*, 5-3-1925.
9. *Ibid.*, 21-1-1936.
10. *Ibid.*, 31-12-1931.

T. S. Devadoss

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF SARVODAYA

I propose to confine myself in this paper to Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to the evolution of a new way to the remaking of society. The ideal envisaged is best expressed by the term 'Sarvodaya'—the all round well-being of all. Bharatan Kumarappa rightly regards Sarvodaya as "India's distinctive contribution to social philosophy."

The present era is marked by deliberate attempts to formulate social values and ideals and the political ends and means which they cherish. In the broad literate world of today, ideologies or 'isms' characterise all dynamic societies. Current ideologies represent social philosophies in support of some 'way of life' conceived of as ideal. Each ideology has its own version of the ideal relationship between the individual and the society of the best government, of the proper balance between individual liberty and the general welfare, and of all the evils and dangers in opposing ideologies.

It might be asked: under what category does Sarvodaya fall? Is it a theory or an ideal or ideology or a utopia? It is a obvious that Gandhi cannot be considered as a theorist because he himself confessed in his *Autobiography* that he did not construct any system of thought. He wrote: " There is no such thing as Gandhism and I do not want to leave any sect after me."[1] "Let no one say that he is a follower of Gandhi. It is enough that I should be my own follower. I know what an inadequate follower I am of myself, for I cannot live up to the convictions I stand for." [2]

Gandhi's philosophy depends on his premise about absolute truth and *Satayāgraha,* and his fundamental conceptions about man, society and the state. Unlike the Western political and social philosophers, Gandhi was reluctant to worry himself to propound systematic theories of state and society. He said with Cardinal Newman: " .... I do

not ask to see the distant scene: one step enough for me."[3] Hence, Gandhi cannot be considered as a theorist in the western sense. In a way, Gandhian thought may be looked upon both as an ideal as well as an ideology. Was Gandhi then an idealist? It is true that Gandhi called himself a 'practical Idealist.' It should be noted that every man who does anything in the world works by virtue of an idea and in the force given to him by ideals, either his own or other's ideals, which he may or may not recognise but in whose absence nevertheless he would be impotent to move a single step. There is a difference between the fanatic of an idea and the true idealist; the former is simply the materialistic, executive man possessed by the ideas of another, not himself the possessor of it; he is haunted in his will and driven by the force of the idea, not really illuminated by its light. A true idealist is not the servant of the letter or the form, it is the idea which he loves and the spirit behind the idea which he serves. The greatest men of action who are endowed by nature with the most extraordinary force of accomplishment owe it to the combination in them of active power with an immense drift of originative thought devoted to practical realisation. Gandhi is an outstanding example of those who contain in themselves the combination which humanity most needs; not the men of action driven by ideas, the pragmatist stirred by half-conscious exaltation from the idealistic, almost the mystic side of the nature, but the seers who are able to execute this vision in the higher terms of human power and knowledge.

The product of Gandhian thought is Sarvodaya. It is an integrated social philosophy. Sarvodaya is not a passive resistance to evil as much as positive assimilation of good. It is a creative synthesis of individual happiness and social good. It is indeed considered as the integrated social philosophy which redeems " the reform of the individual as the reform of the Society. " It is considered as a synthetic philosophy of life because it includes in its scope all known philosophies both human and social. The true ideal of Sarvodaya is not mere summation or integration of the diverse virtues, but their inherent application towards the service of man to become real man. The Sarvodaya integration is a dynamic process and so it consists in the development of more and more perfect forms. Sarvodaya is a pursuit after *Varṇāṣrama dharmas* which covers all aspects of life. On the other hand, *abhudaya* is a life after lower human ideals and rank and riches. The Gandhian ideology of Sarvodaya refuses to be satisfied with the progress and well-being only of a class or a nation. It advocates the good or (*hita*), and the emancipation of all living beings (*sarvabhutahita*) in the language of the *Gītā*. Being a metaphysical idealist and an ethical absolutist, Gandhi pleaded for the good of all and like the Buddha, he was concerned with the good of

all living beings. Sarvodaya aims at universal good, i.e., *lokaniti* of mankind in the pursuit of its universal ideal, i.e., *sarvadharma-samānatva*.

Gandhi's philosophy which is both individualistic and social, can be studied under the following heads: the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, the supremacy of the spirit and the moral law; truth, non-violence or active love and finally purity of means. We find that there is greater emphasis on the moral side of life in Gandhi's teachings. In his long life, Gandhi attempted the synthesis of the ideas of Vedanta, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Tolstoy, Thoreau, Tulasidas and others. If Gandhian thought was mainly a synthesis of moral intuitions and experiences, the Sarvodaya Philosophy tries to build a synthesis also of theoretical abstractions and political and economic generalizations.

It is the firm belief that man can make and unmake the human world that assures the possibility of revolution. Only if he can rise above understanding that he can hope to bring integral revolution. Spiritual understanding is the realization of the fundamental unity of life. The firm belief that in the overwhelming supremacy of the divine spirit provided a meaningful integration, poise and equanimity to Gandhi's life which was full of diverse and multifarious activities. This spiritual orientation and devout faith of Gandhi has left its impact on the other leaders and workers in this movement of Sarvodaya.

The greatest contribution of Sarvodaya ideology to the world of thought is its emphasis on the need for man's discovery of the true self. For ages, this cardinal principle was taught by India's great prophets, saints and spiritual leaders. The message is that spiritual freedom is the common goal of all. Thus Sarvodaya is a synthetic, regulative principle in human relations, transcending history, politics and the pattern of existing social institutions. It is a synthetic ideology and an universal concept. This synthesis, Gandhi believed, can be achieved only on the basis of morality. Gandhi strove to substitute ethical politics in the place of political ethics. This means, moralizing politics. And in so far as morality and religion are not distinct for Gandhi, to elevate politics to the level of morality is to make it live by the spirit of religion.

Gandhi's insistence on moral means does not imply that evil, injustice, and tyranny are to be tolerated. That will not solve any of humanity's problems. Gandhi working in the sociological field, believed that evil must be resisted and eliminated. He evolved a way

of resisting evil through the organization of truth and non-violence. *Satyāgraha* is the unification of these two principles. It signifies 'truth force' or 'soul force."

The most potent legacy Gandhi has left to the world is the technique of '*Satyāgraha.*' Gandhian thought is not explicitly and narrowly an analytical and positive body of political knowledge. Gandhi had a comprehensive approach to life. Man is the centre of consciousness and power of the infinite. Gandhi came to pledge himself not only to Non-violence and Truth, but also to non-stealing, and non-possession — ***ahimsā, satya, āsteya, aparigraha*** and ***Brahmacarya.*** Besides, restraint in food and drink, renunciation and self-sacrifice, bread-labour, swadeshi, untouchability and finally the doctrine of *Sarvadharma-Samabhava* i.e., reverence for all religions. The practice of humility integrates these observances. The manner of integrating act and thought, thinking, in terms of the act, of renouncing in the midst of action and of renouncing the fruits of action is the essence of Gandhi's Philosophy which is being carried by Acharya Vinoba Bhave.

The ethical process — man's continuous effort to translate the great vows in personal life — is fulfilled in the individual by the release of moral energy. That is the way in which the cosmic order is transcribed into the alphabets of human conduct. Gandhi desired the subordination of political and social consideration to moral considerations. He stood by the moral order unequivocally and uncompromisingly. If this law of Moral Causation which is universal and ineluctable is worked with a will, man and his environment in this life and the future will be changed so as to secure Sarvodaya — the welfare of all.

If spirituality reveals the unity of all life, morality which is an offshoot of spirituality, should not tolerate partial applications to a section of the human species. One should not morally suffer in society because of sex difference. Circumstances should be made favourable for the weak, the poor and the down-trodden so as to develop virtue in them. Equality of opportunity for spiritual and moral development is an essential characteristic of a progressive society as envisaged by Gandhi.

The basis of Sarvodaya being spiritual, the means for achieving Sarvodaya social order is also spiritual. His approach to the formalation of political generalization is both deductive and empirical. He deduces certain morals, social and political from his metaphysical assumptions. In understanding Gandhian political thought, one must understand the two different influences at work — one, of the

moral and ethical urge for creating a better world and the other, the practical needs of freeing India. In Gandhi's political thought, the philosophy of an idealist and the programme of a realist tend to merge. And the outcome of this rich synthesis is the philosophy of Sarvodaya.

Gandhi's contribution to Indian politics has been immense. Throughout his life, Gandhi experimented with non-violence, trying to apply it to all spheres of life and studying its possibilities. The non-violent state which he envisaged was in accordance with the principles of *satyāgraha*. Gandhi felt that to try to determine in detail the institutional form of the future non-violent state was premature and unscientific. Thus he worte, "I have purposely refrained from dealing with what the nature of government in a society based wholly on non-violence will be like."[4]

The well-known 'One-step-enough-for-me' principle of Gandhi has also to be understood in the context of his views on the relation between the means and the end. If the means are tainted with violence, physical or non-physical, the resulting state will be neither non-violent nor democratic, for the strong will seize power and exploit the weak. The way to non-violent democracy lies through the adoption of non-violence as the creed and not as a mere policy. Hence the reason, why to Gandhi, the problem of the technique of non-violence included in itself the problem of the institutional form of 'swaraj'. "For me," he repeatedly said "*ahiṁsā* comes before swaraj."

Gandhi's philosophy of state has to be derived from a large number of stray passages in his speeches, writings, statements, interviews and letters strewn over a period of nearly half a century. The 'Hind Swaraj' first published in 1908 and 'The Story of My Experiments with Truth' also provide us with materials that help us in constructing his philosophy of the State.

What is the place of the state in the general framework of Gandhian philosophy? How far, and in what manner, do we need this political organisation to attain the ultimate end of Gandhi's thought, namely, the greatest good of all? To Gandhi, good means not the material well-being of the individual and the society, but the realization of the moral self. Does the state contribute to that end? Is the state a natural phenomenon? Is it a necessity? A satisfactory explanation demands a survey of Gandhi's reflections on the nature of the state, which is beyond the scope of the paper. However, an attempt will be made to trace briely the essence of Gandhian views of state.

It is obvious to us that Gandhi was opposed to the idea of the state. He stood for the stateless society. State implies force and violence. Gandhi is explicit in adopting the ideal of non-violence which follows from his metaphysics. But if force does not play any part in the ideal, it does not follow that it can be eliminated from the actual conditions of life. Hence according to Gandhi, an ideal ceases to be an ideal if it is fully realised. Gandhi did recognise the necessity of the use of force in practical politics and refers to it as unavoidable or inevitable because of human imperfections. Gandhi wrote: "So long as man continues to be a social being, he cannot but participate in the *hiṁsā* (violence) that the very existence of society involves." As far as the state is concerned, it represents for Gandhi, "violence in a concentrated and organised form." As such the state can never attain the status of his ideal. When Gandhi speaks of non-violent state, it would really mean the negation of the state because the state depends on coercion which is the negation of non-violence. We would, therefore, only speak of this as a stateless society, and this remains Gandhi's ideal. What is possible is the gradual progression of the actual state towards the ideal. A government says Gandhi, cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent because it represents all the people. "I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in the possibility of a predominantly non-violent society. And I am working for it."[5]

The ideal non-violent society only represents for the actual state the direction, not the consummation. The actual state is a process rather than a static stage.

In Gandhi's teachings we find a comprehensive concept of freedom. He claimed that his conception of freedom, signified "the freedom of man in all his majesty."[6] To him freedom is a process of growth in quest of coherent moral purposes and action.

Gandhi's devotion to individual rights made him a fighter for democratic freedom. He stressed communal unity and the absolute elimination of untouchability among the foundations of political freedom. As the prophet of *satyāgraha* Gandhi stood for the inalienable, natural and moral right of man to stand against untruth, injustice and wrong in any form. He stressed the correlation between rights and obligations. He pleaded for the adjustment of individualism based on rights to the criteria and requirements of performance of duties for social progress in a non-violent state.

Indeed, a completely non-violent state could hardly be called a state. It would only be called a non-violent society. It is a sort

of enlightened anarchy. "In such a state, every one is his own ruler. He rules himself in such a manner that he is never a hindrance to his neighbour. In the ideal state, therefore, there is no political power because there is no state." The foremost requirement of such a society, according to Gandhi, is decentralization of political life.

"Centralization as a system", says Gandhi, is inconsistent with the non-violent structure of society." " It cannot be sustained and defended without an adequate force." He looks upon 'centralization' with the greatest fear as it results in the concentration of power in a few hands and consequent likelihood of its misuse. Above all, is his fear that centralization would curb the individual initiative and individuality, for Gandhi, lies at the root of all progress.

The nearest approach to his ideal of decentralised society, Gandhi finds in the autonomous village communities of India. This Panchayat Raj is in accord with the ancient traditions of India. The Panchayat of the Gandhian system is viewed as representing a self-sufficient village community, self-sufficient atleast in the necessities of life. As we read Gandhi's thoughts we find that he laid emphasis on (a) Village-oriented economy, (b) on a simple way of life; and (c) on a co-operative socio-economic texture. His aim and purpose in emphasizing this obviously was to make it possible and easy for all to lead a life dedicated to the cause of truth and non-violence. This was the central theme of his life. Gandhi accepted the ethical orientation to economics. True economics, stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life.

The fundamental ethical proposition of Gandhian economics is that man is essentially good. If this be the essential nature of man, whence comes the evil? Indian ethics states that the evil in man comes from the six weaknesses of the human mind — passion, anger, greed, infatuation, pride, and jealousy — which arise from a preponderance of the quality of *rajas* in the individual. This preponderance is not essential to the human personality and can be balanced and controlled by the development of the quality of *sattva* in him. And this is the task of the process of conversion which is the basis of Sarvodaya thought.

Gandhi tried to bring about economic equality through non-violence — by converting the people to his point of view by harnessing the forces of love against hatred. This leads us to the crucial problem of economic thought advocated by Gandhi, viz., the doctrine of Trusteeship. Gandhi discovered a great similarity in the conception

of *aparigraha* (non-possession) of the *Gitā* and Snell's discussion of the maxims of equity. Being influenced by the idealism of the *Iśopaniṣad* which inculcated that things of the world should be enjoyed by renunciation. Gandhi wanted the rich men to hold their wealth in turth for the poor or give it up for them. It may be asked whether such a change is possible in human nature. Such changes have certainly taken place in individuals. What is to be done, if the rich do not become trustees of their wealth in spite of the utmost effort? Gandhi advocates non-violent non-co-operation and civil dis-obedience as the right and infallible remedy, for the rich cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation of the poor in society. Gandhi said: " If only we could make people conscious of the power —the power of non-violent non-co-operation, the realization of the ideal of trusteeship, would follow as surely as morning follows night."[7] Whether we approach the question of Khadhi or the use of electricity or tractors or any other problem we must constantly think out ways and means of making our activity dynamic. Mere affirmation of what Gandhi said is not enough. With both scientific knowledge and faith as our guides, we must carry forward the torch of progress that was lit by Gandhi. The touchstone of all economic progress is the promotion of human welfare. To the extent that we are able to translate our economic policies in terms of the well-being of all, our progress is real. This, in short, is the essence of Sarvodaya economics.

The over-all transformation of the entire race of mankind on all levels of human existence, constitutes the being-qua-being of Gandhi's ideology of Sarvodaya which as I have mentioned earlier is India's distinctive contribution to the world of thought. For the attainment of social happiness, Gandhi thought in terms of *Ramā-rajya* by which he means "sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority." However, Gandhi realised and admitted that India which was not immediately prepared, was not ripe, for the construction of the ideal state pictured by him. Even then he was individually working for the self-rule pictured therein though his corporate activity was " undoubtedly devoted to the attainment of Parliamentary Swaraj in accordance with the wishes of the people of India." But at the same time, Gandhi feared that democracy that grants universal franchise but sacrifices minority for the sake of majority, adopts only partial Vedanta which leads inevitably to the mere appearance of liberty and equality. That adult-franchise granted to the citizens of India who are mostly illiterates is the penalty that we are paying for the degradation of the society and the state.

The problem of political sovereignty in a Sarvodaya State rests only with the people. The emphasis is not on '*Rājya-śakti*' but on

'*Loka-śakti*' According to Vinoba, *loka-śakti* (Will power) means the non-violent self-reliant power of the people. It is a power which is opposed to *himsa-śakti* or the military power and different from *daṇḍa-sakti* or the legal power of the state. Sarvodaya exhorts the people to accept *loka-niti* — the ethic of the people in social life — by eschewing *rāja-niti*. *Loka-niti* in contrast with *rāja-niti* strives to establish the real values of democracy. It is the respectable and equal position of every citizen becomes vigilant about the interest and rights of his neighbours, the less the need of a third intervening agency to set order in human relationships and the better for the mutual co-operation of citizens. Naturally, wakeful self-reliance and willing service, instead of given authoritarianism and the alluring power, will prove the advancement on democratic lines. For this, Gandhi warned the people against reliance on state, time and again. "The shower of help by government animated by welfarism should be the cause of anxiety for a real democrat since it blunts the sharpness of critical consciousness and tightens the knot of external authority thus working for 'illfare' of the people." To this, the remedy lies in self-control which alone ensures self-rule. Under it the ruler and the ruled are united. It will be truly government for each by each. To realise this, politics will have to be raised to the level where it will not exploit humanity for itself, but will exploit itself for humanity. In India, today, we need such leaders of the people, leaders who function as servants truly and not euphmistically. If politics is to be subservient to human welfare, what is needed is the proper handling of power and not its misuse. The experience of India after independence has been rather unfortunate. Craving for absolute power, the parties have neglected the good of the country as a whole. In their anxiety to win power they have intensified casteism, linguism, provincialism and such other tendencies as are inimical to the progress and unity of the country. Purity has revolted against corruption, patriotism has revolted against corruption, patriotism has revolted against inefficiency added to corruption and in the name both of purity and patriotism, party politics and democracy at large have been brought to the bar of judgement. Indeed, Mahatma Gandhi has given us the moral courage to fight evil by good actions though what he has given us through the word was but a fragment of all that he had experienced and realised in the course of a long and varied life, he could yet, almost deluge us with the Universe and rare richness of his splendid creative genius.

But what about us? Have we accepted and lived to follow his teachings in thought word and deed? Or are we still waiting to accept it from him? And has the India of today, the India whom he adored so much, begun to speak to the world through his voice? Can we

say, that our efforts are made in the direction of building up the India of his dream and vision?

It is not to be wondered at that our present political, social, economic policies which swears by Gandhi's name deviate considerably from the Mahatma's ideas. To enumerate a few, prohibition is almost fading away, rural industries are on the downward trend, industrilisation in the country is in the rapid march, but without much success, disintegration, has crept into the minds of people in all spheres of life, fundamentally due to lack of proper perspective in life, further there is lack of popular support for Khadi and other rural industries, lack of self-dependence for all our wants especially food, and above all, lack of sense of unity of the people due to the rise of mushroom political parties and clash of political ideologies.

A question has often been asked : Is Indian planning consistent with Gandhian thought. It is, surely, not very easy to answer this question, which has a variety of implications. Today, planning has come to mean raising the standard of living of the people as much as possible. But the Sarvodaya approach to planning is essentially human and democratic. It is human because its first postulate is to provide employment to all. Vinoba says: " To give work to a few only in the name of efficiency is not 'national planning' but 'partial planning'." Secondly, it pays special attention to the sorrows and sufferings of the 'last man' before attending to the wants and requirements of others. The present national plans in India are of a different variety. They are examples of the planning from the top and they are bureocratic in nature. The real issue is to make our planning dynamic and prevent it from falling into a rut. Although various considerations of economic and technological effiiciency have to be kept in view, it should not be forgotten that the human aspect has to be the decisive factor in our schemes of economic planning. Mr. Chester Bowles draws pointed attention to the potentiality of the village institutions in India and remarks: "It would be tragic if the Gandhian plan of little village republics were abandoned before it has been fully and vigorously tested, it should be reiterated in clear terms that the concept of economic decentralization in the form of small and home industries does not in any way militate against the idea of utilizing the fruits of science." Gandhi was never against the use of science for improving the techniques of village and cottage industries. But we have to think ultimately in terms of economic and social efficiency in the context of community development.

The main problem is how to realize the goal of Sarvodaya, viz., the well-being of all? It would not do to realize it anyhow. The technique must be in consonance with the objective itself, for as

Gandhi said, " As the means, so the end. " Its methods are constructive work, proper planning, and non-violence. All these could be achieved only through a proper mode of education. The highest service that education can render to humanity is to teach every man always to keep his mind open and free, and in the words of the Buddha, to follow its own inner light — *ātma dipa bhāva*. In the words of Sri Aurobindo, "It is not the dawns of the past but the noons of the future that call us to our highest destiny."

It has been said that the way out of the present crisis lies in the recognition that life is more than meat, more than economic, and that is also spiritual. Sarvodaya takes a whole view of man and emphasizes his spiritual nature. The very conception of Sarvodaya democracy denotes going beyond the seeming-conflicts of interests, to a spiritual view of life. It strikes a happy mean between spiritualism and materialism which rejects the spiritual. If we can, at least from today discover and gain mastering of the knowledge of that Dharma, that eternal religion of which 'India has always been destined to be the guardian, exemplar and missionary ', ' we are bound to realise the goal which is human perfection, perfection of the individual as of society and spiritual perfection in a sense that does not exclude material and vital being. Indeed, it is but a poor discovery of India which we make if we are unable to dig in and explore the unfathomable depths of its " spiritual knowledge and experience " which is the very principle of her existence. If we are able to live according to the great ideals of Mahatma Gandhi, we may be sure that this country of ours will survive, as it has survived for centuries, for many more centuries and its philosophy will make a healing of nations and bringing of people together.

It is this philosophy that inspires, for instance, an old prayer :

" *Sarvas taratu durgāni*
Sarvo bhadrani paśyatu
Sarvas tad-buddhim āpontu
Sarvas sarvatra nandatu. "

" May all beings safely cross the hazards and hardships of life;, May all see the beaming face of happiness! May all attain to right knowledge! Let there be universal rejoicing. "

In conclusion the greatest tribute that we can humbly pay to Mahatma Gandhi is not to rest till we reach the goal which is human perfection.

1. N. K. Bose: *Selections from Gandhi* (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1948).

2. S. Radhakrishnan (Edt.): *Gandhi*: 100 *years* (New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1968), p. 89.

3. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 26-12-1924, p. 427.

2. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 11-2-1939, p. 8.

5. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 9-3-1940.

6. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 7-6-1942.

7. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 25-10-1942.

V. A. Devasenapathi

DYNAMISM OF FAITH

Faith is trust or reliance. Trust need not be restricted to spiritual concerns, though it is usual to do so. One may have faith in a fellow-human being *merely* as a human being or faith in an exclusively secular institution or cause. Faith in such cases also generates extraordinary power. But the dynamism of Mahatma Gandhi's faith stems from a spiritual source. He had firm faith in "an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything." In other words, his was a religious faith.

In discussing the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi to the world of religious thought and especially to the world of contemporary religious thought one has to pay some attention to contemporary challenge to religion or to the concept of religion. This goes by the name of Death of God Theology. It may be said that denial of the existence of God is nothing new. In the East as well as in the West – in ages gone by as well as in modern times, the existence of God has been called in question. A writer in a recent symposium entitled *We believe in God*[1] refers to a scrawl in a New York subway: "God is dead — signed Nietzsche"; and another scrawl underneath "Nietzsche is dead—signed God." The interesting feature of the denial is that it comes not from the agnostics and the atheists but from the ranks of theologians. Hence it would be a mistake to dismiss the matter lightly. Even a superficial acquaintance with their literature shows their religious earnestness. They are dissatisfied with the conventional symbols. These symbols are worn thin by constant use and abuse, almost to the point of total disappearance of all meaning. This seems to be a case of familiarity breeding contempt or freedom. This may lead to substitution of new symbols for the old. But whether the symbols be new or old, it is necessary to go *through* or *beyond* them to the reality for which they stand. Wilfred Cantwell Smith has some helpful comments on

this matter. He says: "A religious symbol is successful if men can express in terms of it the highest and deepest vision of which they are capable, and if in terms of it that vision can be nourished and can be conveyed to others within one's group."

"A religious symbol does not then, have its meaning in itself. A cross for instance, means nothing to a Muslim and no amount of examining crosses will help him to learn its religious significance. You can listen to the syllable OM until you are blue in the face, but that will never in itself lead you to hear in it what the Hindu hears in it, or better hears through it (A beginner's step in studying the history of religion is to realise that the Hindu, again does not revere the cow that we see, but the cow that he sees)." Smith goes on to say: "The word 'God' is a symbol; but that to which it refers is a reality. More accurately that to which those who have used this word have potentially referred, consciously or unconsciously, is real. It is a reality about which none of us knows enough to be dogmatic or scurrilous; yet about which each of us, may through his symbols and his own faith, know enough to live — and indeed, to live in a way that is transcendentally final."[2]

The Mahatma considers religion absolutely essential to man. He is positive that no man can live without religion. He compares those who in the egotism of their reason deny their need for religion to a man who says that he breathes but that he has no nose. He explains the position thus: "Whether by reason, or by instinct or by superstition, man acknowledges some sort of relationship with the divine. The rankest agnostic or atheist does acknowledge the need of a moral principle and associates something good with its observance and something bad with its non-observance."[3] Bradlaugh, whose atheism is well-known, always insisted on proclaiming his innermost conviction. He had to suffer a lot for thus speaking the truth but he delighted in it and said that truth is its own reward. Not that he was quite insensible to the joy resulting from the observance of truth. This joy, however, is not at all worldly but springs out of communion with the divine. That is why I have said that even a man who disowns religion cannot and does not live without religion.

The Mahatma presents his conception of God in the following words: "There is an indefinable mysterious power that pervades everything. I feel it, though I do not see it. It is this unseen power which makes itself felt and yet defies all proof, because it is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends reason. But it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited

extent."[4] The reasoning used by the Mahatma is based on analogy. He says: "In my tour last year in Mysore I met many poor villagers and I found upon enquiry that they did not know who ruled Mysore; they simply said some God ruled it. If the knowledge of these poor people was so limited about their ruler, I who am infinitely lesser in respect to God than they to their ruler need not be surprised if I do not realise the presence of God, the King of Kings.

Nevertheless I do feel, as the poor villagers felt about Mysore, that there is orderliness in the universe; there is an unalterable law governing everything and every being that exists or lives. It is not a blind law; for no blind law can govern the conduct of living beings .... That Law, which governs all life is God. Law and the Law-Giver are one."

The Mahatma considers prayer as "the very soul and essence of religion" and therefore as the very core of the life of man, for it is his faith that no man can live without religion. There are many who consider prayer to be unnecessary. They ask, "Why pray at all? Does not God, if there be one, know what has happened? Does He stand in need of prayer to enable Him to do His duty?"[5] The Mahatma answers: "God needs no reminder. He is within everyone. Nothing happens without His permission. Our prayer is a heart search. It is a reminder to ourseles that we are helpless without His support. No effort is complete without prayer, – without a definite recognition that the best human endeavour is of no effect if it has not God's blessing behind it. Prayer is a call to humility. It is a call to self-purification, to inward search."[6]

The Mahatma recognises that prayer may be either petitionary or in its wider sense, inward communion. Though the ultimate result is the same, he desires that even petitionary prayer should be for the cleansing and purification of the soul. He says, "Worship or prayer ... is not to be performed with the lips but with the heart. And that is why it can be performed equally by the dumb and the stammerer, by the ignorant and the stupid. And the prayers of those whose tongues are nectared but whose hearts are full of poison are never heard. He, therefore, who would pray to God, must cleanse his heart. It is faith that steers us through stormy seas, faith that moves mountains and faith that jumps across the ocean. That faith is nothing but a living, wide awake consciousess of God within. He who has achieved that faith wants nothing. Bodily diseased he is spiritually healthy, physically pure, he rolls in spiritual riches." He declares that prayer has been the saving of his life and that without prayer he would have been a

lunatic long ago. He says that on all occasions of trial God has saved him. 'When all helpers fail and conforts flee', help arrives. Somehow, from where he does not know. Hence he decides that supplication, worship and prayer are no superstition, they are acts mere real than the acts of eating, drinking, sitting or waking. It is no exaggeration to say that they alone are real, all else is unreal.[7]

The Mahatma's reference to the Inner Voice or the voice of God may be puzzling to many. Let us hear what he himself says on this matter. 'The first question that has puzzled many is about the Voice of God. What was it? What did I hear? Was there any person I saw? If not, how was the voice conveyed to me? These are pertinent questions.[8]

'For me, the voice of God, of conscience, of truth, or the still small voice mean one and the same thing' 'I saw no form. I have never tried, for I have always believed God to be without form. But what I did hear was like a voice from afar and yet quite near. It was as unmistakable as some human voice definitely speaking to me and irresistible. I was not dreaming at the time I heard the Voice. The hearing of the voice was preceded by a terrific struggle within me. Suddenly the voice came upon me. I listened, made certain that it was the voice and the struggle ceased. I was calm. The determination was made accordingly, the date and the hour of the fast were fixed. Joy came over me ... Could I give my further evidence that it was truly the voice that I heard and that it was not an echo of my own heated imagination? I have no further evidence to convince the sceptic. He is free to say that it was all self-delusion or hallucination. It may well have been so. I can offer no proof to the contrary. But I can say this that not the unanimous verdict of the whole world against me could shake me from the belief that what I heard was the true voice of God' ... He says, "I shall lose my usefulness the moment I stifle the 'still small voice within.' He expresses it was his firm belief that God reveals Himself daily to every human being but we shut our ears to the 'still small voice."

Here is his brief but well-tested advice: 'Begin (therefore) your day with prayer and make it so soulful that it may remain until the evening. Close the day with prayer so that you may have a peaceful night free from dreams and nightmares. Do not worry about the form of prayer. Let it be any form—it should be such as can put us into commnunion with the divine. Only whatever be the form, let not the spirit wander while the words of prayer run on out of your mouth.[8] While firmly established in Hinduism,

his own faith, the Mahatma did not deny himself participation in the treasures of other faiths, especially Christianity and Islam. His admiration for the Sermon on the Mount and his delight in hearing Cardinal Newman's 'Lead, Kindly Light', are well-known. The practice of reading from the Koran was as much for the benefit of his Muslim followers as for his own and for the benefit of all non-Muslims in his prayer group.

The Mahatma thus taught by precept and example the need to enrich ourselves by participating in the riches of all religions. We find these days well-directed attempts for a comparative study of all religions. We find excellent commentaries and expository works relating to other faiths. We shall be following the good example of the Mahatma in a widening our religious perspective by a reverent study of other religions. It is gratifying to find that such a study instead of unsettling our faith only deepens it all the more. There is another advantage, too. We could avoid popular misunderstandings of some of the basic concepts of other religions. There is, for instance, a prevalent misunderstanding of the concept of 'penitence'. This is supposed to engender sick-mindedness. No doubt, it would do so if we misunderstood it and misapplied it. But understood correctly, it is seen to be very necessary in our religious life. Penitence is not to be confounded with remorse. Disappointment with ourselves, writers point out, is mere vanity. On the other hand, in penitence we realise that we have acted contrary to the will of God and thus committed an offence against the love and majesty of God. We realise that we have gone in a wrong direction and we seek to turn in the right direction. In the devotional outpourings of the saints of all religions, we find frequent expressions of penitence. Sickness is not normal to us. Hence to become aware of Sickness is to realise the need to get back our health.

Likewise, we find on a close study rich significance in the Muslim prayer. 'There is no God but God.' It need not be a horizontal interpretation rejecting the gods of other faiths but a vertical one showing the aspirant's ascent from scepticism to faith. I find Wilfred Cantwell Smith's exposition helpful in this context.

There is no God but God:

No man, this reading suggests, can legitimately and truly say 'God' who has not previously said and meant, 'no God'. To arrive at true faith, one must first pass through a stage of unbelief. 'There is no god'—this comes first, and must be lived through in all sincerity and all terror. A person brought up in a religious tradition,

must have seen through that tradition, its forms and fancies, its shams and shibboleths; he must have learned the bleakness of atheism and have experienced its meaninglessness and eventually its dread. Only such a person is able to go on, perhaps only years later, to a faith that is without superficiality and without merely cheap and second hand glibness. If one has said "there is no God" with the anguish of genuine despair, one may then, with God's grace, go on to say ... but God," and say it with the ecstacy of genuine insight.[9]

The Mahatma give us very clear guidance in this mater. He says, 'There is one rule, however, which should always be kept in mind while studing all great religions and that is that one should study them only through the writings of known votaries of the respective religions. For instance, if one wants to study the *Bhagavata*, one should do so not through a translation of it made by hostile critic but one prepared by a lover of the *Bhagavat*. Similarly to study the Bible one should study it through the commentaries of devoted Christians. This study of other religions besides one's own will give one a grasp of the rock-bottom unity of all religions and afford a glimpse also of the universal and absolute truth which lies beyond the "dust of creeds and faiths."[10]

The Mahatma said that he had made an advance in his spiritual life when he came to prayer. 'Truth is God', to 'God is Truth'. Apart from widening the platform to accommodate others besides conventional believers in God, the Sanskrit word *'Satya'* calls our attention to a deeper aspect than mere propositional truth value. It is related to 'sat'—or being itself. Hence to swerve from truth is to be cut off from being—The ancient prayer: "Lead me from the unreal to the real"—provides the key to the understanding of the Mahatma's faith. Is it fanciful to conclude that in this ascent of faith, the Mahatma was led on to light and immortality?

1. *We believe in God* (Unwin Forum), p. 159.

2. Wilfred Cantwell Smith: *Questions of Religious Faith*, (Charles Scribler), p. 16-17.

3. M. K. Gandhi: *My Religion* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House), pp. 3-4.

M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 11-10-1928, p. 340.

5. *Ibid.*, 23-1-1930, p. 25.

6. *Ibid.*, 23-1-1930, p. 25.

7. Mahadev Desai: *Diary* (Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House), p. 275.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 275.

9. Wilfred Cantwell Smith: *The Faith of Other Men* (A Mentor Book),

10. N. K. Bose: *Selections from Gandhi* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House), p. 258.

S. Gopalan

MEANS AND ENDS: THE GANDHIAN VIEW

One of the significant and well-known aspects of Gandhian thought is its insistence that means are as important as ends and hence its outright rejection and condemnation of the view that ends justify the means. The school of thought which maintains that ends justify the means holds that if the Social Good is to be at all achieved it is not merely desirable but is extremely necessary that we should not have any compunctions of the heart while devising the ways and means of achieving the goals set, ends envisaged. This signifies that *any means* could be employed for achieving a good end. Lenin is said to have maintained the necessity to use any ruse, cunning, unlawful method, evasion, concealment of truth... Gandhiji, in no unambiguous terms, has expressed his total disapproval of such a point of view. He writes. "They say, 'means are after all means'. I would say "means are after all everything." As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between the means and the end. Realization of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception." [1]

In this paper an attempt is made at elucidating Gandhiji's view in so far as the means-end question forms the basis of his social idealism. The relationship of means to ends, it is conceded, is very much more comprehensive than its application to the realm of social ideology, but, to limit the discussion to the core of Gandhiji's social philosophy, it is considered necessary here to treat the question of means and ends as if it does not have any other significance.

The Gandhian view-point can be comprehended fully by a reference to the social idealism which represents an application of his ethics to society. Gandhiji's social idealism offers us an insight into the precise reasons for his holding on to his view that means,

rather than ends ought to be the basis of individual as well as social action.

'Social idealism', is one of the most misunderstood terms and it requires some analysis here in order, on the one hand to pinpoint the nature of the idealism of Gandhiji and, on the other, to explicate the significance of the means-end question.

The philosophic usage of the term idealism which is most significant in our context is 'the methodical effort to explain . . . objects in terms of ideas and then to reintegrate the unity of the world of and experience.[2] In the realm of social theory idealism plays its role by promoting the conditions and providing the climate and temper for 'transforming' the social actualities, for making improvements in the existent social conditions. The transformation aimed at and the ends sought for are, by hypothesis, *desirable* conditions for society and even approximations to the ideals thus considered desirable indicate social progress. Gandhiji was an idealist precisely in this sense, viz., in his emphasizing the possibility of a continuous march of man towards perfection. He used to say: 'We are imperfect even in body. Therefore we seek perfection elsewhere. We are not content to remain what we are. God has created that "divine discontent" in us. We, therefore, go on saying "Not this, not this", and try to press forward.' Gandhian idealism is not one of the types of Utopia which sounds lofty, seems impressive and is actually unachievable or impracticable. Gandhiji seems to maintain that though generally it is said that ideals, to be ideals, are to be so far away from the actualities as never to be within the reach of individuals or institutions striving towards them, we should not overlook the possibility of becoming mere theoreticians when we do not relate ourselves (even while talking about the social norms) to the existent social actualities.

This is evident from Gandhiji's preference to describe himself as a 'practical idealist' rather than as a 'visionary.' [3] He looked forward to the realization of the ideal but would not run away from the world or ignore it because it could not, at one jump, attain an ideal state. Having been, as he put it, an 'erring and struggling mortal' himself he sympathized with the struggles of humanity and chose patiently to work and wait for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, taking life as it is and proceeding further in the direction of the ideal.

The uniqueness of Gandhiji's means-end theory consists in the fact that he not only propounded an ideal applicable to groups of human beings everywhere but demonstrated to the world that with a 'will to believe' and determination to achieve, social actualities could be transformed by aiming at and trying to approximate to the ideals envisaged. Such a theory, it is obvious, is a result of analysing man as a value-pursuing, self-reflective and social being. Reflection about not merely the ends but the means is the characteristic of the human species and Gandhiji's significant contribution to the world of thought and action consists in his unrelentlessly maintaining that the means are more important than the ends.

It should be appreciated that Gandhiji did not merely differ from others in maintaining that means determine the end but in demonstrating to the world of action that value-enunciation and ideal-formulation do not represent simply the conceptual analysis that is inherent in human thinking, but provide the necessary conditions of achieving *human ideals*. It is because of this that we find Gandhiji emphasizing that restraint rather than retaliation is the true human characteristic. He writes: "We pretend to believe that retaliation is the law of our being. Whereas in every scripture we find that retaliation is nowhere obligatory but only permissible. It is restraint that is obligatory ...... Restraint is the law of our being. For, highest perfection is unattainable without highest restraint." [4]

Since self-restraint signifies that we should have control over our passions, the impulsiveness that prompts us to adopt any means to achieve an end, the Gandhian emphasis on the means becomes understandable. Restraining ourselves is meaningful more in regard to the means than in regard to the ends for the simple reason that we have more control over the means than over the ends. Gandhiji writes: "I have always said since 1909, that means and end are convertible terms and that ,therefore, where the means are various and contradictory the end must be different and even contradictory. We have always control over the means and never on the end." [5]

This argument for the means being accorded all the importance is acceptable since the very talk of achieving an end, the very idea of realizing an ideal signifies that we have but only vague notions and glimpses of the ends to be achieved. This is as much true of social ideals and norms as of individual values. Achieving an ideal therefore becomes possible only by taking note of and working on the better-known 'facts'.

Though the means and ends are thus distinguishable they are not distinct since they are not entirely different from or discontinuous with one another. The term "means to an end" signifies gradual achievement of the end. That is why Gandhiji maintains: "The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed ant the tree."

From the emphasis on the means that Gandhi lays it should not be mistaken that he was for ignoring the end altogether. His life, the ideals he had formulated for himself and, above all the programme he gave to his people to achieve independence and the progressive realization of it go to show clearly that he appreciated the necessity of having clear-cut and well-defined ends to be achieved. His meaning is clear. Rather than thinking and talking about the ideals it is better to do something positive about the, to achieve them. He observes: "Though ...... the necessity of a clear statement of the goal (is emphasized) ...... having once determined it. I have never attached importance to its repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there, if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their progressive use. I know if we can take care of them, attainment of the goal is assured."[6]

From this it is evident that the 'end' in Gandhian thought has the significant function of providing the 'mean' a sense of direction and a regulating principle. His very strength, lay, as he used to say, in his realizing that he is imperfect, that the goal of perfection is yet to be attained and that the attainment itself would be possible only by a long and continuous process of striving towards it.

The deep psychological insight that he possessed was responsible not merely for his appreciating the difficulty of man and society to traverse the long and rugged road to perfection but for his robust optimism regarding the possibility of attaining a sense of fulfilment in the individual's life and of achieving perfection of institutions, bringing the ideals down to the earth and enabling transformation of human life. That the animal in man did not escape his attention is evident from his words: "Man as animal is violent but as spirit is non-violent."[7] All the same he used to maintain that violence is not intrinsic to the human personality and therefore perfection in human life was possible of achievement. He used to

observe that non-violence is the law of human society and that the very existence of society was an evidence to this fact. "If love as the law of the family "could work" why could it not be extended and applied to the nations who are all members of one family, the family of man?" he used to ask.

It becomes clear then that Gandhiji's view that means determine the ends derives its significance also from the fact that he set the end of man as "perfection". The clear implication here is that if "perfection" is the end of individuals and institutions it could not be attained by imperfect (impure) means. Even assuming that perfection itself may not be achieved fully (and Gandhiji explicitly accepts that the possibility cannot be ruled out completely), it is all the more important that we should concentrate on the purity of the means.

Having confined ourselves in this paper, to his social idealism to interpret the significance of his insistence on the purity of means, we shall conclude by referring to the fact that Gandhiji's lofty social idealism was responsible for his adopting the non-violent means to achieve independence for his country. Oneness of humanity which was accepted by him as an article of faith well-tempered by reason and founded on a careful observation of human society was at the back of his nationalism while he was working for an independent India. He considered nationalism as an essential step towards realizing the oneness of mankind, and so he was even prepared to say that if independence could be attained only by violence he would not have independence for India. That such a lofty ideal he gave to his country was attained by pure means vindicates his theory and fills us with confidence that the courage to be and the confrontation of evil by good are the only means by which the unity of humanity of which Gandhiji was an advocate and for which many leaders of the world are working today can be attained.

1. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India.* 17-7-1924.

2. *The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York, Macmillan Company, 15th Printing, 1963), Vol. VII, p. 569.

3. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India,* 11-8-1929.

4. *Ibid.,* 9-3-1920.

5. See B. G. Tendulkar: — *Mahatma* (New Delhi: The Publications Division, Government of India, 1st edn., revised, 1961), Vol. III, p. 299.

6. *Amrit Bazaar Patrika,* 17-9-1933.

7. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan,* 11-8-1940.

Hyder Ali Khan

THE CREED OF NON-VIOLENCE AS CONCEIVED BY GANDHIJI

I have been tempted to take part in this seminar more to pay my humble tribute to that immortal spirit, the Mahatma, than to enlighten this august gathering on the loftiness and subtlety of his thought. It will be my endeavour to express before you the significance of the creed of Non-violonce as conceived by Mahatma Gandhi.

I may at the very outset say that with Gandhiji Non-Violence was not a means to an end, but an end in itself. He was one of those very few people who believed that however good the cause might be, the means to achieve it must also be good. An end, however noble, loses its charm and grace if the means to achieve that end are not based on truth. Here the need for *Satyāgraha* i.e. adherence to truth under all circumstances, is felt. *Satyāgraha* and *ahimsā* go together. They are inseparable. One cannot be thought of without the other.

With my meagre knowledge of Sanskrit words I can say that *Satyāgraha* means trying oneself to truth. Whatever the consequences, one must not leave the path of truth. I am reminded of Sadi, the eminent Persian poet who says :

Rasti moojib-i-Riza-i-Khudast

Kas-na deedam Ki gum shud az rak-i-rast.

" Truth necessitates pleasure of God. I have never seen any person treading the straight path being lost."

It is very easy to say that one should follow the path of truth, but it is very difficult for one to actually follow it. Many considerations stand in the way. Sometimes personal consideration,

and very often, consideration for the dear and near, make us go astray. Sometimes unintentionally we go astray from the path of truth. This has to be avoided by subjecting ourselves to introspection and self-criticism. For all this one should have dauntless courage. However painful the consequences, one must not mind them. He must have the strength to bear them all.

All this is possible if one has strength of conviction, confidence in self, patience and power of endurance. The strength gained by such a procedure is beyond estimation. The forces of evil dare not subdue such a person. By the might of arms he may be imprisoned, or may even be killed. But even then he remains unconquered. Birj Narayan Chakbast a great Urdu poet, says:

Mujhae aseer Kareiñ ya meri zabañ Kateñ

Mere Khiyal ko baedi pinha nahiñ sakte

"Let them either imprison me or cut my tongue. In either case they cannot put my mind under chain."

Gandhiji's *Satyāgraha* or adherence to truth was of this nature. He always subjected himself to self-criticism, and never hesitated to accept his mistake if he had commited any. If he felt that he was right, he stood firm and never gave way. He never reconciled if he was sure that he was on the right. His approach to problems was not that of an ordinary politician. He never liked the policy of stooping to conquer. He never practised diplomacy. Such a man alone could rejuvenate a people who had been groaning under a foreign rule.

It will not be out of place if I quote here an anecdote from his life. When he was in his *Āshram* at Wardha during the non-violent struggle against the British, a man against whom a warrant of arrest had been issued for his political activities, managed to slip off from his residence. Later he reached Gandhiji's *Āshram* hoping that he would be protected. But Gandhiji, as a true non-violent fighter, wedded to *Satyāgraha* far from protecting him, advised him to surrender to the police and bear the consequences. "A non-violent fighter" he explained "has to face danger, and not run away from it".

A *Satyāgrahi* has to follow the path of non-violence. That is a natural concommitant. *Adharma* (Injustice) and *Himsā* (Violence) go against truth. It has already been stressed that the means to achieve a good end must also be good. Through violence limbs

can be won over, but not the mind. If peace is established by violence it will be the peace of the grave yard, and not that of a busy town. Recently we read in the papers that by a big army of a very big nation marching into a country, peace was established. But that peace is undoubtedly that of the grave yard. When a victory is achieved through violence, the bickerings of the heart of the defeated foe remains. But when a non-violent fighter wins, he wins the heart of the foe. The foe throws arms voluntarily and runs to embrace the non-violent fighter.

When Gandhiji began his non-violent struggle in what is known as Salt *Sayāgraha* he proved victorious. But in subsequent *Satyāgrahas* he realised that the masses could not rise as high as himself, and his devoted followers while admiring Gandhiji for his saintly disposition transgressed the rules of *Satyāgraha* because their emotions got flared up. He called off the *Satyāgraya* on such occasions. Later he directed only his trusted followers to offer *Satyāgraha*.

During the Quit India Movement also, when people began to damage railway lines, burn compartments and cause destruction to Government properties, he reprimanded the people, and told them plainly that what they were doing was wrong. He drew their attention to the fact that public wealth was their own; and they could not destroy their own property. Granting that it was enemy's property, as non-violent fighters they could not do any bodily harm to the adversary. They could not cause material loss to the enemy. This was against the spirit of non-violence.

Gandhiji made the point clear that he wanted the non-violence of the brave and not of the coward, that of the powerful and not of the weak. The non-violence of a coward and a needy person is a matter of expediency. Such a person cannot but be non-violent. Non-violence is not of his free choice. This type of non-violence does not give him any credit. Let me again quote S'adi, the Persian poet :

Tawazu ze gardan farazan nekoost
Gada gar tawazu kunad khɔa-i oost

"Humility becomes persons in power. If a mendicant shows humility, that is his habit"

What applies to humility applies to non-violence. A beggar or a weak person cannot be violent. But if a man with power to cause destruction is non-violent, that is to be admired.

At the time when Gandhiji adopted non-violence as his creed, he was the accredited leader of India. No body thought of him as a mere political leader. They always considered him as a great spiritual leader endowed with divine voice. With the masses, his word was law. At his behest they would all have laid down their lives. With such backing of the people, if he wanted, he could easily have adopted violent means. But he detested from that and preferred to have a non-violent approach to the problems. Hence the non-violence of Gandhiji was the non-violence of the brave and not that of the coward. He believed in suffering for the good cause rather than causing suffering to others. By the continued suffering of himself and his followers he proved the dictum propounded by an Urdu poet :

Zulm ki inteha to hai laikin
Sabr ki inteha nahin hoati.

"Cruelty stops at a certain stage being unable to go ahead; but patience does not".

The Jalianwala Bagh incident, death of Lala Lajpat Rai and frequent imprisonment of Gandhiji and his followers had shown that cruelty could not go further. But patience shown by Gandhiji and his followers was never lessened. The vigour shown in the beginning was maintained to the very last.

Was Gandhiji a pacifist? Was non-violence, as put forth by Gandhiji, a negative force? The answer to these questions is an emphatic 'no'. Gandhiji was not a pacifist, nor was non-violence of his conception a negative force. Gandhiji never believed in purpose-less suffering. He believed in non-violence as a motive force for the assertion and establishment of his point of view. The gigantic success achieved only goes to show the positive nature of the movement and the potentiality it possessed. Only after sufficient experimentation Gandhiji prescribed it as a remedy for all ills, whether individual or national or international. Non-violence will be meaningless if there is no sincere and honest adherence to truth. If all the individuals, all the groups and all the nations follow these principles, a panacea for all the ills of the world could be found.

A question arises whether a nation, which has adopted non-violence as its creed, should not have a police force or an army to defend itself. This question will be answered if we realise that it is not the aim of non-violence to create

chaos and anarchy in the world. It is not meant to disturb the order of society. If we do not use force to arrest a thief, we are indirectly helping violence. The same is the case with an aggressor. If a nation commits aggression, one cannot submit to it. That would mean that we are ourselves a party to aggression. We have to defend ourselves. But when the aggressor is subdued, we must not repay him in his coin, and taking advantage of his weakness, we should not commit aggression on his land, unless it be necessary to prevent further aggression. We must approach the vanquished with sympathetic consideration. A non-violent fighter does not bear ill-feeling and is not carried away by the passion of revenge. He does not mind under-doing things, but he abhors over-doing.

I hope it will not be out of place if I quote an incident from the life of the Prophet Mohammed (May peace of God be on him). When he began his sacred mission in Mecca for which he had received Divine Commission, persecution began from all quarters. He was stoned almost every day not only by young urchins, but also by the grown-ups. The way he passed through was covered with thorny things. As he passed, women from the top of their houses threw dust and dirt on him. He bore all this humiliation silenty like a true non-violent soldier. When he learnt that he was having quite a large number of supporters of his mission in Medina, he decided to change the seat of his activity from Mecca to Medina. He left Mecca without any fuss. Even here he was not let alone. The quraishis, his own kith and kin, instigated other Arab tribes to join hands, and to kill him and all his followers. At this stage he felt that for the safety of his religion and his followers he must put forth strong defence.

Finally a time came when he had thousands of people in Arabia converted to his religion. With this mighty army he marched towards Mecca. The Meccans dared not oppose such a mighty force. He had an easy entry into the city. The Meccans were trembling and were expecting an onslaught. They had in view all that existed then, they expected a severe revengeful attitude on the that existed then, they expected a vere revengeful attitude on the part of the Prophet. The Prophet issued instructions to his followers that no sword should be raised and that all should watch him. He went up a mound and asked the vanquished Meccans to stand round. They did so expecting that their doom was near. He praised God and declared :—

Latathreeba alai kum-ul-yaoma

izhabu fa antum-at-tulaqea

"Today you will not be asked to account for your misdeeds, for henceforth you are free".

This surprised the Meccans. They realised that he was the true prophet. So they all volunteered to become Muslims.

This is what a non-violent fighter does. He has no personal animosity or jealousy or the spirit of revenge. He fights for the good cause, and when the enemy realises his fault and corrects himself, the matter is closed.

The way of all divine teachers has been non-violent. Only a few of them, Sri Rama, Sri Krishna and Prophet Mohammed had recourse to battles. These battles were not of their liking. They were forced on them. These battles had to be fought for the maintenance of justice and real peace. We must have peace; but not at all cost, and certainly not at the cost of justice.

Even in Gandhiji's days there was an aggression on our own land, soon after independence. Gandhiji did not ask us to be submissive. He not only permitted defence, but also blessed the Indian Army.

I have quoted all these incidents to show that non-violence should not be misconstrued or understood wrongly.

Gandhiji, the non-violent fighter, not only fought the mighty British Power, but also his own people in order to create a casteless, and a classless society. Today multitudes of the down-trodden people of our land are enjoying, a much better status only because of this non-violent fighter. They are not today referred to, thanks to this extraordinary man's endeavour as *Pancamas* or depressed classes or untouchables. They have been given a very charming name, *Harijans,* i.e., God's own men. Because of his endeavours and sacrifices, and because of the inspiration he instilled, these erstwhile unfortunate people have witnessed new dawn of life which has brought to them a new form of life and new hope for the future. They have education, better dwellings, better clothing and better surroundings.

Gandhiji's non-violent fight was against class-difference as well. He did not want a microscopic minority to control the finances of the entire nation. He was against great disparity in scales of pay. He wanted ministers to lead a life of austerity, and to draw meagre sums from the exchequer for their existence. He

wanted the head of the state to be identified with the lowest in the country and not with the highest. He was not for communism, but he was also dead against exploitation of the common man. He wanted the common man to be happy and contented, and not to suffer under social, economic and political barriers. He wanted food and education to be as cheap as air and water.

The true *Satyāgrahi*, the most non-violent fighter, Gandhiji faught against communal prejudices. He went to Naokhali, not minding his own safety, when the situation was tense there. He risked his own life to protect the lives of others. In India also he had to carry on this non-violent struggle to the last breath to create love among the various communities.

For internal peace Gandhiji suggests many things. He exhorted the Harijans to lead a clean life. He asked all Indians to abstain from the use of liquor. He wanted the labourers to be duty-conscious and the industrialists to consider the labour problem as a human problem and pay them what they could. He wanted a national language for Indians which should be understood by the masses and not by a few scholars. He wanted the Khadi movement to go deep into our very life. He suggested many other useful things. In the light of his teachings when I cast a look on the affairs of my country, I begin to wonder whether, like great philosophers of the world, he is followed with the same zeal as he is respected. Let this Seminar help us to follow him better.

T. V. Mahalingam

BUDDHA ASOKA AND GANDHIJI: A STUDY IN COMPARISON

Like any ancient country India has its own civilisation. But the civilisation of India differs from those of many such countries, in that it has continued to the present day without any break. If a country's past history has any contribution to make to the world, and its progress, India's contribution has been largely in the realm of spiritual and meditative discipline. It is a fact of history that some of the great men of India, though born to wield power and authority, have deliberately turned away from them and held themselves away from material bonds not only to satisfy their own spiritual cravings, but also by their precept and example have emphasised certain human and spiritual values. Among them were the Buddha and Asoka in ancient India; and in modern times Gandhiji played a unique part by a similar role.

The life story of the Buddha is partially disclosed and partially shrouded in many layers of later legends. Though brought up amidst surroundings of luxury, the Buddha was anxious to learn the meaning of life. The feeling grew in him that birth leads only to suffering, decay and death and there is no end to the succession of such births. He wanted to find out a way to get deliverance from reincarnation. So he abandoned his home, and spent seven years in fasting and self-mortification only to be reduced to a skeleton; he realised that asceticism could not lead him to the salvation that he wanted. Later, while absorbed in deep meditation under a pipal tree in Gaya in spite of the temptations of Mara, he became enlightened (*Buddha*), the true law having been realised by him. He experienced the liberation he had been seeking for and gained the redeeming knowledge (*bodhi*) of deliverence for days remaining in the same spot and later moved to Sarnath near Banaras where he delivered in the Deer Park his first sermon, usually known as the "turning of the wheel of law" (*dharmacakrapravartana*). For the

rest of his life he led the life of a mendicant preacher, propagating his doctrines in the language of the people. He himself and his teachings were on the whole received well by many, high and low, including women.

In India it was the age of the *Upaniṣads* marked by deep philosophical speculation. Thinking men were exercising their minds over problems like the nature of God and soul, the relation between God and man and the best way of attaining salvation, including the need and value or otherwise of brahmanical ceremonials and rituals for attaining it. The Buddha too thought over them and gave his own solutions to them. He believed in rebirth and *karma,,* according to which a man's condition in his present life is determined by his past actions, there being no end to such births. His teachings consist of the four noble Truths *(Āryasatyāni)* (1) existence is unhappiness, (2) the cause of this unhappiness is selfish craving (3) when selfish craving is detsroyed rebirth ceases and (4) such cessation *(Nirvāṇa)* can be brought about by following the good law or the eightfold path which consists of (1) right understanding, (2) right purpose of aspiration, (3) right speech, (4) right conduct (5) right vocation or livelihood, (6) right effort, (7) right remembrances or alertness and (8) right meditation or concentration. His emphasis on the importance of following the eight fold path is significant. The first two of them are preliminary to the solution. The next three affirm the determination of the individual to reach the goal. The last three take one to the goal of *nirvāṇa* "which is a state marked on the positive side by a sense of liberation, inward peace and strength, insight into truth, the joy of complete oneness with reality and love towards all creatures in the univere." He also impressed upon the need for the observance of ten commandments which may be summed up as "not to kill, steal or commit adultery, not to lie, not to speak ill of other people, not to indulge in fault finding or profane language, to abstain from covetousness and hatred and to avoid ignorance." All these teachings show that Buddha laid emphasis on ethical conduct. God, Veda and sacrificial ritual do not find a place in the system.

Aśoka is the greatest among the Philosopher Kings of history, the third king of the Mauryan dynasty founded by Chandra Gupta Maurya. He inherited a vast kingdom which had been reared by his grandfather and father. In his early years he appears to have lived the life of an ordinary king quite like his predecessors. In the nineth year after his coronation he conquered Kalinga country after a hard fight, his only conquest. The horrible incidents of the war, the slaughter and the consequent sufferings of the people for

which he was responsible had a deep effect on the delicate sensitiveness of the emperor, and marked a turning point in his career. He became a changed man in his personal and public life. He became sad, repentant and remorseful, but wise. Henceforth king Priyadarsi became intensely devoted to the study of *dharma*, to the love of *dharma* and to the inculcation of dharma. He became a lay disciple of Buddhism and continued to be so for two and a half years, at the end of which he began to develop great and active devotion to the faith. He came into close contact with the Buddhist *Sangha*. He visited many holy places including Sambodhi and held discussions on *dharma*. Later he issued his first religious proclamation calling upon his officers to exert themselves in the cause of *dharma* like himself and started different lines of activity for the propagation of the same, his main objective being the moral upliftment of the community. In the next few years he issued a number of edicts in different series for the spread of *dharma* among the people. It is from them that one can hear the moving voice of Aśoka across the centuries regarding *dharma*. These edicts which are thirty four in number and contain about five thousand words are engraved on rocks and pillars in different parts of his vast empire.

The concept of *dharma*, which is universal has two aspects, one relating to the individual and the other relating to human relations. '*Dharma*, in the individual, consists of few sins and many good deeds, of avoidance of evil and passions—of anger, cruelty, rage, pride, and envy—and of cultivation of kindness, liberality, truthfulness, inner and outer purity, gentleness, saintliness, moderation in spending money and acquiring possession, gratitude and devotion. These are manifestations of morality and love of it. *Dharma*, in human relations, takes the form of moral code which is repeated in several edicts; obedience to mother, father, elders, and those in authority; respect for teachers; proper treatment of members of the priestly and ascetic orders, relatives, slaves and servants, the poor and unfortunate, friends, acquaintances and neighbours; liberality to ascetices, friends, companions, and the aged; abstention from slaughter of living creatures. "

Thus the *dharma* that Aśoka spread among his subjects as also in foreign countries is another name for morality and virtue and religious piety and social obligation. It is not necessarily based on any religion, creed, or dogma, and therefore, is capable of universal application and acceptance. Aśoka created a new cadre of officers known as the *Dharmamahāmātras* whose function was to lead people to attachment to morality and to action according

to it as well as to increase the morality (*dharma vriddhi*), of people already devoted to morality (*dharma yukta*). The reasons for his propagation of *dharma* were two fold. Firstly he, quite like many kings in ancient India felt that he was bound to promote the real welfare of his subjects, as a father is bound to promote the welfare of his children. The second reason is also given by himself in the following words: "And whatever effort I am making is made that I may discharge the debt which I owe to living beings, that I may make them happy in this world and that they may attain heaven in the world." Thus he considered his work as a debt he owed to subjects.

Gandhiji whom many of us have seen and probably some of us have known personally is too near us in time to enable us to understand him as we can attempt to do men like the Buddha and Aśoka. His life till its end was one such hectic and unceasing activity that there was practically no aspect of life in India which he did not touch, work for and influence. There is voluminous material about him, much of it consisting of his own writings.

It is not necessary to review the life and activities of Gandhiji, for most of us know many details of his life. From 1914 when he returned to India after his success in the non-violent disobedience movement against racial discrimination in South Africa which he organised, all his activities were directed to gain recognition for the demands he made on behalf of labour. The method he adopted for them was the same as the one which he had found successful in South Africa. As days passed, he devoted himself to work more and more for the change or improvement of the social and economic conditions of the people in the country, which he felt were at the root of its backwardness and poverty. He took into account concrete realities in the social and economic conditions and tried to offer solutions for many of the problems. He felt that the economic improvement of the country and the people necessitated the revival of handicrafts which would augment the poor resources of the labourers. His programme of village reform was calculated to provide among others better housing facilities and hygienic conditions besides rational methods of farming.

He showed by his personal example the good fruits of working together and doing manual work. For inculcating such ideas among the young he evolved a new educational system, the basic educational system as it is generally known, its ultimate objective being 'not only the bringing into existence a balanced and harmonious society—a just social order in which there is no unnatural dividing line between the haves and the have-nots and every body is assured

of a living wage and the right to freedom." For the social uplift of the people he wanted control of alcohol and poisonous drugs, abolition of child marriage, equality of women with men with regard to rights and the removal of all prejudices and disabilities against the untouchables whom he called Harijans.

We have so far reviewed in brief the work and teachings of the Buddha, Aśoka and Gandhiji. Now to deal with some of their teachings in detail: they differ in many ways, though with regard to certain fundamental questions their approach and solutions to them are almost similar and they appear to speak with one voice.

The Buddha was a Prince who was brought up under luxurious surroundings, and it was the sight of people who were suffering on account of some reason or other that made him meditate in seclusion on the problems of life and attain *nirvāṇa*. It was the destruction and carnage that Aśoka was himself responsible for in the Kalinga war that suddenly changed him and his outlook and policy and made him abjure war as an instrument of policy, and work for the propagation and inculcation of *dharma* inside and outside his empire, using for it his position and all the available resources with him. Gandhiji was an ordinary person and did not belong by heredity to the great ones of history, but was one who evolved continuously, reacting to situations as they presented themselves to him. His application of his princples to practical problems in life showed very often bewildering variety. He endeavoured to understand the day to day practical problems of life with which humanity is faced and solve them. Each of the three worked in his own way, least minding the success or failure of his endeavours.

The achievements of a person depend largely on two factors, the contemporary conditions he is challenged to meet and the genious of his own personality. Each of the three was the product of a set of conditions, which by his work and teachings he tried to influence. Take for instance the concept of *Varnaśrama*. Though the Buddha taught a way of life for getting redemption from the chain of births and deaths irrespective of one's caste or station in life which was different from the Brahmanical way, and admitted into his monastery people from all castes saying 'just as the great rivers, when they fall into the ocean lose their identity, even so do the four castes when they have gone forth in the doctrine and discipline taught by the Tathagata,' he was not for reforming the whole caste system. He was not interested in it, and probably he could not have found it easy to do so. But he had great respect for the true Brahmins whom he distinguishes from the false ones. Such

brahmins were expected to observe five *dharmas*: truthfulness (*sacham*) austerity (*tapam*). continence (*brahmacaryam*), study (*ajjhenam*) and gifts (*cagām*). Though Aśoka does not speak of of the four orders in his edicts he refers frequently to his concern for the *brāhmaṇas* and *Sramaṇas* and the *Buddhist*, *Ajivika* and *Nirgrantha* ascetics. By *brāhmaṇas* it appears he means the brahmanical order of ascetics.

Gandhiji says on caste or *varṇāśrama*: "I have not hesitated to consider *varṇāśrama* as a gift of Hinduism to mankind. Acceptance of that *dharma* is, so far as I have been able to see it, a condition of spiritual growth." "I am one of those who do not consider case to be a harmful institution." Thus he believes in caste, and affirms that if Hinduism is to be a living force in the world we have to undersatnd its real purpose and revive it. According to him the idea of superiority and inferiority among the different castes has to be removed. 'The four divisions are not a vertical section, but a horizontal plane on which all stand on a footing of equality, doing the services respectively assigned to them.' Thus he has faith in *varna*, division of labour, rather than caste as is seen now.

The doctrine of *ahimsā* has been treated in different ways by the three. Though the Buddha was an exponent of *ahimsā*, one finds—in the initial stages in the history of Buddhism that the idea of compassion towards living beings is limited. The Buddha is himself said to have taken meat, and when asked about it, he explained that he would refuse meat when he knew that the animal was slaughtered for him, but he allowed himself the enjoyment of the same if it was placed before him when he happened to arrive at the time of a meal or of what was put in his alms-bowl. The Buddha did not think it necessary or possible to bring help to every living being for 'all suffering has its origin in will-to-live, and it can only be ended by the denial of that that is to say only through an act of knowledge by the living creature concerning itself'. No purpose is gained by wishing to alleviate its sufferings. Earlier traditions about the Buddha do not show that the Buddha exhibited any active and positive compassion to living creatures. "But it is in the Buddhist *Jātakas* that he is described as a great friend of animals, and that on one occasion he gave himself to a hungry tiger to save her from the cruelty of devovering her own kind."

He is described as one who was full of human sympathy, was very much concerned with the sorrows of men and anxious to

assuage their troubles and show his compassion to them. This aspect of his teachings emphasises ethical values in life, like kindness to fellow living beings. He tells his monks : 'Now this is what you must practise well, my monks: our temper must remain unruffled no evil sound shall issue from our lips, we will remain friendly and sympathetic in a temper of loving kindness, without secret malice; and we will irradiate our personality with loving feelings; starting then we will irradiate the whole world from wrath and rancour. This is what you must practise well my friends" 'Abiding in a spirit of loving kindness the monk shines in one direction, then in a second, then in a third, then in a fourth, similarly upward and downward ; recognising himself everywhere in everything he irradiates the whole universe with loving kindness.'

But on the whole the ethics of the Buddha do not go to their logical extent. 'It is not an ethic of action, but only of inner perfection.' According to him man can work for his own redemption and not for that of living creatures.

"But the importance of the Buddha lay in the fact that the detachment of the heart from material things is more important than the renunciation of the world in actual practice."

Aśoka enthorned *ahimsā* (non-killing) as never before or since by any emperor in the history of the world and issued proclamations imposing restrictions on feasts and slaughtering of animals. In his pillar Edict V issued twenty six years after his coronation he ordered that a number of birds, quadrapid and acquatic animals specified in it were not to be killed. Husks which contained living creatures must not be burnt. Forests were not to be burnt without reason or in order to kill living creatures. The living were not to be fed on the living. Animals in elephant preserves and fishermen's preserves were also not to be killed. Again on specified days bulls, he-goats, rams, bears, and other animals were not to be castrated, and horses and bullocks must not be branded. According to Rock Edict I many hundreds of thousand living creatures were previously slaughtered everyday for curries in the kitchens of the emperor. They were reduced to three, two peacocks and one deer, the latter not regularly. The emperor stopped the slaughter of even these animals. He also banned the killing of any living creature at *Pataliputra,* his capital as also the holding of some types of festive gatherings (*samājas*) as he saw many evils in such gatherings like slaughter of numerous animals for feeding the large number of people who gathered together and enjoyed themselves on such occasions. Thus he brought the doctrine of *ahimsā* to the forefront

But in his oversensitiveness for saving the lives of animals he was indirectly discouraging and putting restrictions on the performance of Vedic sacrifices in which many still believed, though among certain sections of people there was a growing feeling against it. The great emperor does not appear to have had the same amount of feelings for the sacredness of human life. He did not stop capital punishment in his empire. He was content with giving three days respite to persons condemned to death to enable them to pray to God for a better life after their death.

Gandhiji, was a strong believer in *ahimsā*. He says 'literally speaking, *ahimsā* meant nonkilling. But to me it has a world of meaning and takes me into realms infinitely higher. It really means you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even towards one who considers himself to be your enemy.' He gave it a new meaning and tried to apply it to the solution of many current problems. According to his *ahimsā* is more than what it is taken to be, namely avoidance of killing and the causing of pain which is only a negative attitude, and includes definite and positive acts exhibiting compassion. He felt that *ahimsā* should be practised not only in letter but also in spirit. For instance, he thought that even if one killed a living creature to save it from agony it should be considered an act of *ahimsā*, and so he ended the sufferings of a calf in its prolonged death-agony by administering poison to it, though the act created a flutter in the minds of many people. There is another side to his approach to *ahimsā* where also he came into grips with practical problems. He was of the view that a man, in order to maintain life, can if necessary commit acts of violence, as for instance when he is attacked by a wild animal or a poisonous creature. But the most important aspect of his concept of *ahimsā* relates to his application of the same to the solution of political questions, for to him 'there are no politics that are not at the same time a religion.' According to Gandhiji *satyāgraha* is a non-violent method for the vindication of truth and the attainment of certain worldly objectives. The terms *satya* and *āgraha* mean respectively truth and insistance or persistence. The combined word means therefore insistance or persistence in truth. It is more than 'passive resistance' as it is considered to be. It actually means force which is born of truth or love or non-violence. It is a new experiment. 'It means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under the law of our being it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul, and by the foundation for that empire's fall and its regeneration.' The question for the solution of which *satyāgraha* is undertaken must be a moral one and

employed for the same must be pure and good. It must be carried on with purity of mind, love for all and hatred for none, including the antagonist. It must ultimately benefit both. The *satyāgrahi* is a true *Karma yogi* who considers it his duty to do what is just and proper, least caring for the result. He suffers without any rancour in his mind. 'His suffering is sanctified by his love, devotion and truthfulness which ultimately go to change the heart of the opponent.' Thus according to Gandhiji *satyāgraha*, the real aim of which must bring about a mutual understanding founded on love, 'forms the river-bed for the floodwaters of the spirit of love.' This philosophy of *ahimsā* is a unique contribution of Gandhiji to Indian thought. Gandhiji himself says 'non-violence is not a cloistered virtue to be practised by the individual for peace and final salvation but a rule of conduct for human society if it is to live consistently with human dignity and make progress towards the attainment of peace, for which it has been yearning for ages past.' Gandhiji himself says that he got this idea from the following saying of Jesus: "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil' and 'Love your enemies . . . . pray for them whihc despitefully use you and persecute you." He was also influenced by the "*Bhagavad Gītā*" and Tolstoy's. The Kingdom of God is within you." But this *ahimsā* as expounded and practised by Gandhiji cannot be followed by all, unless they are trained in it, and have fully realised its spirit. Hinduism stands for *ahimsā* and in later times, the lives of animals were sought to be protected, particularly that of the cow. One point may however, be mentioned here. Though there was a general feeling in favour of *ahimsā*, the killing of animals and living things for sacrifical and ritualistic purposes was not considered an act of cruelty. But where it was considered so the killing of living things was replaced by the cutting of lime fruits and the breaking of coconuts which are symbolic. It is for the sin formed. Thus orthodox Hinduism, without going to the extremes of destroying living vegetables for cooking that *vaiśva-deva* is per strikes a good compromise between *himsā* and *ahimsā* and that is one of the secrets of its success and unbroken continuous history through the ages.

In view of Gandhiji's strong feelings about *satyāgraha* his attempt to enlist volunteers for service as combatants in the First World War is not easily understandable, though it is explained that Gandhiji thought by such help given when it was badly needed England might be inclined to recognise the rights of the Indian people. About such inconsistencies with regard to his views Gandhiji however says: "Consistency is not an absolute virtue" and again "I have no regard for consistency as such. My only concern is with truth as I see it from moment to moment."

A great thing about the Buddha is that he is free from dogmatism. The Buddha who had great respect for other people felt that those who thought and said that their views or doctrines were final and should be accepted, and not any other view or doctrine were full of intellectual pride. He told even his followers that they should not accept his views unless they were convinced of their acceptability. Thus he showed his tolerance of others and their views. Aśoka felt likewise and proclaimed that 'the faiths of others all deserve to be honoured for one reason or another. By honouring them one exalts one's own faith and at the same time performs a service to the faith of others. By acting otherwise one injures one's own faith and also does disservice to that of others. For if a man extols his own faith and disparages another because of devotion to his own, and because he wants to glorify it, he seriously injures his own faith. Therefore, concord alone is commendable, for through concord men may learn and respect the conception of *dharma* accepted by others.' Gandhiji who was faced by a variety of social tensions and communal problems, particularly the Hindu-Muslim problem emphasised the need for communal amity among men and the removal of all tensions among them. Regarding the Hindu-Muslim problem he said 'My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent to such a doctrine is for me denial of God. For I believe with my whole soul that the God of the *Quran* is also the God of the *Gitā* and that we are all, no matter by what name designated, children of the same god.' He believed that all true religions have proclaimed the same truth and there should be no malice or hatred among men. It was for his work for the cause of the unity between the Hindus and the Muslims that he was shot dead by a bullet by a misguided youth.

The attitude of the three towards women was not the same. The Buddha was not prepared to give women equality of status with men, though after a lot of opposition, and at the intercession of his disciple Ananda he granted to them the right to monastic life and founded an order of nuns. The nuns were, however, not given equal status with monks. For instance though the nuns had been ordained for a considerable length of time they were required to salute every monk in a very reverential way even if he had been ordained only recently, and remain in his presence and show him honour with folded hands. This kind of treatment to women is said to have been explained by the Buddha in the following words: "Women are not tempered; women are jealous; women are envious; women are stupid; crying is the power of the child; anger is the power of women."

Though Aśoka does not say much about women directly he felt that they were performing many ceremonies which were not of much use. Gandhiji pleaded for the equality of women with men. He acclaims the women as the mother, maker and silent leader of men, and regards her as the noblest of God's Creation.

It is not easy to think of three great men of destiny more different from one another. Saint Buddha 'Walks calmly and serenely across the pages of history with a gentle smile and infinite compassion drawn from living beyond human problems and leaving behind the memory of peaceful joy never perturbed. And after his death the spirit that followed through him drew him more adherents than any other spiritual teacher the world has seen.' Asoka at the height of his power and glory turned to the practice and inculcation of *dharma* which alone he thought would lead man to heaven. The objectives the Emperor had in his mind and the measures he promulgated to achieve the same have an universality that extends beyond time and space. Gandhiji made a concerted effort like Asoka to spiritualise state craft and politics and represents a humanism and cultural tradition of a very high order. Though Gandhiji said that his objective was liberation from the bondage of the world, he found that he could attain it only be unceasing service to this world itself.

The approach of the Buddha to the solution of the problem of the removal of human misery was by what may be called *jnānamārga* or *yoga,* Aśoka felt that happiness in this life and after may be attained by the pursuit of *dharma,* which is a way of life. Gandhiji's view was that service to humanity was service to God. Being a practical idealist he put his ideals into actual practice.

All the three felt strongly that before the reform of the world is thought of or attempted, the individual should reform himself. Unless people purify themselves and work with inner peace no reforms can be effected in the world. It is this point that is brought out with remarkable force by the lives and teachings of these three great men of India, though there might have been differences among them in their spiritual evolution. Their basic ideas and teachings have a meaning to the world of today when the problems that face individuals and nations are fundamentally moral problems.

P. Nagaraja Rao

THE GANDHIAN CONCEPT OF DHARMA

Mahatma Gandhi is described and admired for several of his achievements, etc., as the liberator and the foremost freedom fighter of India, as the Father of the nation, as the herophant and prophet of Non-violence and Truth. He is admired most for the way and view of life he outlined and persistently attempted to live. The India of his dreams was the image of a society mould by justice and charity i.e. *Sarvodaya.* He lived and worked for it in all its concrete details. He stood for the total progress of the entire humanity echoing Christ, 'I will give unto this last even as unto Thee.' The determination and resolve to build a new India and awakened humanity is his claim for immortality, gratitude and love from millions in posterity. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has summed up his achievement in a single sentence. "He has worked for a major change in human nature. His is a voice of the age to come and not that which is fading and should fade away." He represented the 'conscience' of humanity. Our classical poets and contemplative seers would describe him as the *Dharmātma*, the soul of righteousness. In the world of habitual violence he dared to preach and practice, on a global scale, non-violence with considerable success; in a world of technology, and gadgetery and the mad rush for material success in the name of a higher standard of living and the emergence of an affluent society, he foresaw its ways preached simple living and moral thinking with austerity. He gave men a code and an universal creed to live for when they lived as they liked in a muscle-civilization, with no institutions and cocerns for themselves or their fellow-men. Gandhiji grew amidst us, not in isolation on mountain tops or monasteries, but in a society. He marched in time hand in hand as the eternal pilgrim, taking men of clay, aspiring to mould them into heroes. His experiments in life, with men, problems, food, dress, and politics is open to us all to read and draw inspiration. He said that he was no more than common clay and claimed no divinity.

But he strove hard all his life, with an unconquerable perseverance, with no respite to evolve into a *Dharmātma*. The perfection of his character, as of Valmiki's Ramachandra is the result of strenuous and unrelenting discipline. Such a perfection which he worked out of his qualities and character to transcendental excellence has justifiably made many look upon him as an *avatāra*. 'Prophets may preach, but incarnations trnsform men' said Vivekananda. Gandhiji when perisistently questioned by Nirmal Kumar Bose in Noakali as to why he did not try to convert him to his point of view, answered "I think I have faith in God; and I try to live accordingly. But if my life does not convey that faith to you, then words alone will not be of any use." True to the spiritual tradition of India he believed that *ācāra* is the foremost *dharma* and as *Vasiṣthasmṛti* put it, the Vedas do not purify him who is bereft of good conduct.

All the activities and achievements of Gandhiji are anchored in *dharma*. *Dharma* is the integrating principle of all his work. It is the regulating principle that restores order and invests life with meaning and lifts man from his animal level to human dignity. As long as men are content to live on at the biological level, and continue their life to sense-bound horizon, they are only glorified animals minus their virtues. Gandhiji held the view that *dharma* alone can enable us to live as men and women possessing our own minds and souls, not as censored dum-driven regiment with no virtue except obedience. Of all the qualities of Gandhiji, the one round which all else revolved is the superhuman passion for *dharma* and the unceasing intrepidity with which he strove to incorporate it in the souls of men and institutions of our society. He kept *dharma* all the time before his vision. He was never indolent and he always had self-possession. His ideal was the *poise* of *Sthithaprajna* of *Gitā* and the activity of the *Karmayogin*. His serenity was unshakable, and in the most trying circumstances he remained unagitated with perfect poise. But the call to action was the essence of *dharma* to him. *Dharma* to him was not speculative cogitation of psychic anxiety (*sankata*) or dilemma between courses of action. It was a call to sacrifice and to do the right irrespective of the consequences. Morality is not a state of mind, but it is concrete activity. Gandhiji opposed vain speculation and always insisted on our implementing our moral resolves without self-pity, or sentimental forms even in the face of mighty odds. This explains his complex nature which is softer than a rose-petal and harder than the hardest steel. (*vajradapi kathorani mrduni kusumadapi lokattaranam cetamsi ko nu vijnatum arhati*). The Gandhian concept of *dharma* is the imperative to act and redress every challenge

evil, without evasion. To him to evade a moral issue is another name for spiritual suicide (*atmahāni*). To act in a *dhārmic* manner under all circumstances, defined and undefined eventualities, the chief prerequisite for man is renunciation. He who cannot renounce cannot be moral. Renunciation is nothing more or less than the cracking of the selfish-ego. The *Upaniṣads* sing its glory as the way to realisation of the Brahman; Buddha renounced his all before his enlightenment, Jesus took upon the cross, Socrates gladly drank the cup of poison and Gandhiji faced the bullet from a brother Hindu, with no hate in his heart, with the Lord's name on his lips before he laid his life for unity and fellowship of religions. Gandhiji dreaded more the defilement of the soul than the death of the body. He set little store by it though he never neglected its upkeep.

The Gandhian conception of *dharma* is dynamic and active. He said that there are two windows to the soul of man; one is physical and the other is moral. Act we must, and there is no freedom from action and there is only freedom in action. This lesson he derived from the *Bhagavad Gītā* which he described as his mother and spiritual dictionary. The way we live our entire life according the *Isa Upaniṣad* is by renouncing, even enjoyment of life is not possible without the power of renunciation. The Indian tradition and the great religions of the world hold out that power and glory belong to the renouncer. When we are confronted with the glamour of power, wealth and worldly glory and by the lusts of the lusts of the flesh with all its glittering charms, the *dharmātma* must be able to unhesitatingly renounce them if they contravened the principles of morality or *dharma*. The Lord himself says: 'Renunciation is the key to dharmic life, *dharmic* life is service to humanity which is impossible without renunciation.' The *Upaniṣads* declare:

> "It is not by rituals, nor by progeny, nor by wealth but by renunciation alone".

Gandhiji's conception of *dharma* was not merely scriptural. He has not hesitated to repudiate any social custom which goes against the custom conscience of elightened men, however old it may be. He believed that the concept of *dharma* is dynamic and does undergo changes with the advance of man's growth. He found that the evil of untouchability was a direct insult to man's ethical consciousness. His memorable words before the minority committee of the Second Round Table Conference are: "Let this committee and through it the whole world know that there is a body of Hindu

reformers who feel that untouchability is a shame not on untouchables but on orthodox Hinduism and that they are pledged to remove this blot. I would lived rather Hinduism died than untouchability. I want to say with all the emphasis I command that if I was the only person to resist this, I would resist it with all my life." The Gandhian concept of *dharma* is not the product of any one religion, for it is the assimilation and synthesis of the best in all religions which Gandhiji feels and fearlessly borrowed. Gandhian *dharma* is not a static compound of code and morality which is immutabe and wooden. It is a living principle that helps man to uphold the essence in him and keep down the ape. It is a principle of growth, a way of evolution to the development of the best and the universally good in man. Its creed is to treat every human being as an end never as a means. It is the simple assertion of the Kantian imperative to treat man in our personality or in other men never as means but always as an end. This spells the end of all exploitation.

Exploitation and selfishness are at the base of all immortality according to Gandhiji. To put an end to it is *dharma* the establishment of the 'kingdom of God on earth.' The confiict between capital and labour, the conflict among nations, in individuals between sexes are at bottom the results of exploitation.

Exploitation is the natural tendency of unregenerate men. It is the fruit of greed. It is the cause of all restlessness in the life of nations, and groups of men. It arises from the non-recognition of the unity of existence, the divinity in men and mutual involvement of all lives in society. Once we know and acquire the faith in the divinity of man and the sacredness of his life we will cease to exploit others. We need to enlarge our vision and see beyond our senses, and this improves our understanding. That brings about the growth in our grace and sensitivity. Gandhiji writes:

> "There cannot be happiness for any of us, until it is won for all.
>
> "I do not believe that an individual may gain spiritually when all that surround him suffer. I believe in *Advaita*. I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives. Therefore, I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the whole world gains with him and, if one man falls, the whole world falls to that extent."[2]

The *dharma* of man expresses itself in action. Gandhiji believed in man's 'free will' and also in his capacity to exercise it in righteous ways. If there is no free will for man, history is a myth, progress is a mere slogan. According to Gandhiji any spiritual seeking cut away from life is a thing away from truth itself. One of the most significant entries in Dag Hammarsksjoel's diary is 'In our age the road to holiness necessarily passes through the world of action.' Gandhian ethics stands for an achievement for a spiritual society and not a status—oriented society.

In more than one sense the Gandhian conception of *dharma* is derived from different religions. Gandhiji's *ahimsa* has nothing in common with any one tradition of men who close their nose and mouth lest a fly may go in and who as they walk sweep the floor so that no insects may be killed. Gandhiji borrowed the best in all religions and rejected the obsolete and the antisocial in his own religion. He does not reject anything good and great because it is from an alien tradition. He has declared that he derived his Sarvodaya from Ruskin's *Unto this last,* his non-violence from the *Gītā*, *Tolstoy* and the *Sermon on the Mount,* and his love of the simple life from Thoreau. Whatever he borrowed was assimilated by him into his *sva-dharma.* He writes, "I do not want my house to be walled on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all the lands to blow about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any of them." Gandhi accepted the Hindu doctrine of *varnāśrama dharma* and gave it a revolutionary significance and not as a hierarchy determined by birth and status. He believed in the use of muscles but not in its aggression. He believed in the christian emphasis on *charity* as love but would not approve of the proselytisation or the claim that Christ is the only—personal manifestation of God. His concept of *dharma* in the words of G. Ramachandran is a "revolutionary synthesis." The Gandhian dharma asks us to accept the challenges of life, react to it and remake it.'

Gandhiji knew like all great religious teachers that good and evil are concurrent in the stream of life. But he asks us to exhibit the courage to give *battle to evil,* not to allow it to triumph, *but meet it with soul force,* without compromising with evil. If we do nothing about evil, it is sure to triumph all the way. The greatest discovery of Gandhiji is that the *weak* need not yield to the strong man, for he has a soul-force to fight. The Indian scriptures say that *dharma* is the arms of the physically weak

against the unjust strong men. Gandhiji believes with the Hindu Ethics "Dharma protects him who practises it and destroys him who deviates from it." *Dharma* sustains, upholds and nourishes society.

Gandhiji besides accepting some common forms of virtues as binding on all, also accepts the concept of *svadharma*. The nature of the individual *dharma* varies with the position, vocation and stage in life. It may be relative to others, but it is absolute to him. He is to grow from where he is. *Svadharma* is evolutionary path carved out for each man. As nature has gone into endless diversity each should do what he can and not what he wishes to do. The doctrine of *svadharma* secures spontaneity, grace, and ease. It avoids social waste, and makes for individual freedom and manifold diversity.

The Gandhian concept of *dharma* expresses itself best in his concept of non-violence. He regards that violence is built into the hearts of men artificially by military training. He holds that man is essentially non-violent in the core of his personality. Violence in any form and its use in any circumstance, and in service of any cause is unqualifiedly immoral for Gandhiji. It is in this that Gandhiji's contribution lies. He equates violence with *adharma*. He sees no good to be obtained from its use. Like all Indian seers Gandhiji sees in *dharma* the welfare of men. He echoes the final shrill cry and lament of Vyāsa towards the end of the saga of the Kauravas and Pandavas in the *Mahābhārata*.

> 'With uplifted arms I cry out, alas none listens: Through dharma one can attain material welfare and realise his desires as well; then why is not dharma resorted to?'

ūrdhvabāhuḥ viraumyeṣa
na ca kaścit śṛṇoti me
dharmādarthaśca kāmaśca
sa kimartham na sevyate.

Sri Rama upholds the glory of *dharma* and unfolds its functions. Human experience makes it clear that the pursuit of *dharma* alone brings in its trail wealth, pleasure and all else, in the manner one attains all aspirations from the marriage with a beloved and obedient wife.

dharmārthakāmaḥ kila jivaloke
samīkṣita dharmaphalodayeṣu

ye tatro sarve syuh asamśayam me
bharyeva vaśyabhimata saputra

The importance of *dharma* as the emblem of human dignity whose rejection makes man worse than an animal is approved of by Gandhiji. The *Yajurveda* declares that *dharma* is the support of the whole universe. In this world all men approach the man of *dharma* for guidance. By *dharma* is evil destroyed. In *dharma* everything is established. Therefore they say *dharma* is superior.

Gandhiji like Christ exhorts us "Seek ye first *dharma* and all other things will be added unto you. He who follows *dharma* gets all the goods in its wake. *Dharma* as Gandhiji understood is the law of *one's being*. *Dharma* in the words of Radhakrishnan "is like an elastic tissue which clothes our growing body. If it is too tight it will give way, we shall have lawless anarchy and revolution. If it is too loose it will trip us and impede our movement."

For the exercise of *dharma* man needs vision and self discipline. The unregenerate nature of man always tends to pleasant existence and not moral life. Hence the need for disciple. Man has to choose between *dharma* and an animal life decreed by folly and sustained by violence. Gandhiji like the great sons of India and sages, knows that the path of *dharma* is not disclosed at once for us to pursue. On occasions as the *Mahābhārata* put it the divine sages are of divided opinion about *dharma*, no one sage's opinion is accepted 'as final.' The truth of *dharma* is hidden in a deep cave." It is under such trying circumstances that the cultivated, well-meaning *should* look upon the dictates of his conscience as *dharma*. Our national poet Kalidasa declares "when a man is unable to make a decisive choice, he is to follow the voice of conscience." On many occasions Gandhiji has identified conscience not only with morality but also as the voice of God. The different articles of Gandhiji's faith e.g. his insistence on Non-violence as the method for solving all conflicts, his trusteeship theory, his conception of the function of sex, his plea for the removal of untouchability, his insistence on rural reconstruction, his scheme of education, all seek to redress the *adhārmic* and the exploiting element of man's character.

Gandhi knew that mere constitutions can never save people. Plato in his *Republic* asks us the question. "Do you imagine that political institutions spring from a rock, or a tree and not from the dispositions of citizens which turn the scale and draw all else in their direction? Constitutions are as the men are and grow out of their character." There is no use having laws on the statute books, for their real place must be in the structure of society.

The *Mahābhārata* states, "a people flourish, not because of a constitution or a law giver, but because they are guided by *dharma* and help each other in cooperation."

Naiva rajyam norad ant na
dando maca dandikah

Dharmenaiva praja servah
Raksantima parasparam.

The massage of Gandhiji's life is the proclamation of Asvagosa's and help each other in cooperation."

Exhortation.

prasāraya dharma dhvajam
prapūrya dharmaśankham
pratadaya dharma dundubhim
dharmam kuru dharmam kuru

Fly the flag of *dharma*
Sound the conch of *dharma*
Pound loud the drum of *dharma*
Keep to *dharma*, keep to *dharma*

1. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 29-12-1924.
2. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 4-12-1962, p. 398.

C. A. Perumal

THE RELEVANCE OF GANDHISM TO CONTEMPORARY INDIA

It is most appropriate to discuss the relevance of Gandhian philosophy to contemporary India, even as we are celebrating his birth centenary in India and abroad. Gandhism has been a creed and a way of life for the people of India and elsewhere and Gandhian teachings very often take new dimensions in their meaning and also occasionally lose their form and shape because of indiscriminate stretching and straining of their principles. Gandhism has verily become universal and provides the ethical, political, and economic basis for most of the political parties and social movements in India in recent times.

We need not explore and analyse the various ramifications of Gandhian teachings but confine ourselves to describing its impact on Indian society, government, and administration since Gandhi's death. I venture to suggest that the core of Gandhism has been kept alive and at any rate not forgotten by the Indian people. That core is the Sarvodaya society characterized by the tripod of anarchism, socialism and secularism.

The first political element of Sarvodaya is a sort of philosophical anarchism. To Gandhi political power is not an end but the means to human welfare and happiness. The ideal society, to him, is one of enlightened anarchy and social life is to be self-regulated and co-operative. Since his ideal society based on total non-violence is not possible of immediate realisation, Gandhi preached a Sarvodaya democracy, the next best and attainable alternative, which would be a non-violent decentralised democracy based on the principle of the equal moral worth of all human beings. To Gandhi, a state if it is to function democratically must be pluralistic. Decentralisation of large communities and deconcentration of power are necessary elements of Sarvodaya democracy. The village as the key unit of Sarvodaya democracy is to be self sufficient and autonomous.

Gandhi says "in this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance, but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units. Therefore the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it."[1]

The villagism that Gandhi advocates which is the root of his Sarvodaya human order is an expression of his aversion for capitalism, statism and bureaucracy. "True democracy cannot be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village"[2] He wanted to revive and revitalise the small village communities which have declined in their importance in administration and politics. Gandhi wanted to create a system in which villages could play a major role and share a sizable portion of the responsibility of the central government and could also act as agents of political socialisation. This Gandhian element has been the guiding light of the Constituent Assembly of India and the principle of Sarvodaya democracy has been accepted as an ideal and adopted for our society. Article 40 of the Constitution of India says "The state shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government." Though illiteracy, poverty, casteism etc. have thwarted the development of a proper system of panchayat administration, almost all the states have enacted laws creating village panchayats and vested in them powers of self-government.

Gandhi envisaged a system of economy, particularly for India, which would avoid the misery and suffering and waste incidental to capitalist production. He also wanted to secure political and individual liberty as a safeguard against state capitalism. He devised a pattern of industrial and agrarian order to afford the vast mass of starving Indians immediate and increased employment, equitable distribution of material goods without making them lose their democratic liberties and social values. He knew that the problem of unemployment and poverty could not be very successfully solved by agriculture alone and that industrialisation of the country was necessary. He advocated his theory of village and cottage industries along with agriculture. His theory of economics has been very

unambiguously stated as follows: "An economics that inculcates Mammon worship, and enables the strong to amass wealth at the expense of the [illegible] false and dismal sign. It spells death. [illegible] stands for social justice, it promotes the good of all equally including the weakest, and is indispensable for decent life."[3] "You cannot build non-violence on a factory civilisation but it can be built on self-contained villages. Rural economy eschews exploitation altogether and exploitation is the essence of violence."[4]

Gandhi was not opposed to industrialisation of the country but was against big centralised machanised industry whether private or public. Gandhi himself answered emphatically "No" to a question whether he was against all machinery. "But I am against its indiscriminate multiplication .... I am uncompromisingly against all destructive machinery. But simple tools and instruments and such machinery as saves individual labour and lightens the burden of the millions of cottages, I should welcome."[5] Thus one could see that Gandhi was not opposed to industrialisation but to its effects and insisted on decentralised industry. Nehru, the heir of Gandhi while inaugurating the Integral Coach Factory on October 2, 1955 observed " I am quite sure that if it had been our good fortune to have Gandhiji with us today, he would have been glad at the opening of this factory."[6]

Gandhi knew that the problem in India was not one of adopting any ideological social theory but one of practically solving the appalling poverty and helplessness of the masses living in the villages and he worked for their Swaraj. He knew this was due to the want of gainful employment and hence formulated a theory of decentralised industry. He was sufficiently successful in establishing a new economic structure for India. As a socialist he was somewhat nearer to the Fabians. He condemned the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few. He also hated privileges and monopolies and whatever could not be shared with the masses was taboo to him.[7] He had no doubt that machinery merely helped a few to ride on the back of millions and wanted large factories to be nationalised.[8]

Gandhi's economic ideas to a certain extent, if not in their entirety have influenced the Constitution of India (Articles 38, 39, 43 and 48 of the Directive principles of state policy). To a great extent they have moulded subsequent legislation on land holding and income accumulation and distribution, exports and imports. Our National Planning has been in the direction of the achievement of an increase in national income, to raise the standard of living, rapid

industrialisation with a bias for basic and heavy industries; opportunities for employment; improvement of agricultural production; encouragement of village and cottage industries and reduction of inequalities of income and wealth and even distribution of economic power.[9] This envisages clearly a 'Welfare' or 'Sarvodaya' state which aims at social welfare and the common good, to secure to all citizens 'justice, social and economic' as declared by the preamble of the Indian Constitution. Sarvodaya economics is the lintal progenitor of modern 'Socialistic pattern of society' which brought about the agrarian reform, abolition of the Zamindari system and ceiling on holdings and incomes.

Throughout his long public life Gandhi worked hard to bring about communal harmony and unity. On a number of occasions he had to resort to fasting to bring caste tensions and communal violence under control. The Gandhian concept of secularism is not materialism, atheism or agnosticism or even calvinism but it is a profound religious faith based on the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. Equality of man, irrespective of their caste, colour or creed occupied the central places in the Gandhian state. He could not entertain the idea of setting up a democracy in India without granting the untouchables their rightful place in society. "Swaraj is a meaningless term, if we desire to keep a fifth of India under perpetual subjucation and deliberately deny to them the fruits of national culture."[10] Articles 13 to 17 of the Constitution of India make void any law custom or usage by which any person is placed under any disability on account of his belonging to a socially, educationally or economically backward community.

Gandhi believed not only in the equality of men but also in the equality of the religions of the world. "I believe in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world ...... they were at the bottom all one and were all helpful to one another."[11] He practised essentially the Hindu philosophy of tolerance, and he wanted the state to be secular leaving religious faith to the people who long had a secular tradition in inter-religious relations. "The state should be undoubtedly secular. Every one living in it should be entitled to profess his religion without let or hindrance so long as the citizen obeyed the common law of the land."[12] Articles 25 to 30 of the Constitution of India create an environment in which it is possible for every citizen to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience and also secure to every individual, a freedom not only to entertain such religious belief but also to disseminate his religious ideas. Subsequent events have confirmed that the state in India is secular and concerned with the social relations between

individuals and that no one could be compelled to accept or give up one's creed or belief.

Thus one could conclude very objectively that the Gandhian concept of Sarvodaya with its tripod—anarchism, socialism and secularism has determined to a large extent India's political, economic and social life since 1947. Gandhism is an ideal and what we have achieved or attempting to achieve is only an approximation to it. As Nehru declared " We have not often thought of Gandhiji and his great doctrine, of his great message, and while we praise it often enough, we feel we are hypocrites, talking about it and being unable to live up to it. Are we deluding ourselves and the world? Because if we are hypocrites, then surely our future is dark." [13]

1. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 18-1-1948.
2. *Ibid.*, 18-1-1948.
3. *Ibid.*, 9-10-1937.
4. *Ibid.*, 4-11-1939.
5. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 17-6-1924.
6. *Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches*, Vol. III, pp. 23-24.
7. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 2-11-1934.
8. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 13-11-1924.
9. Brochure on the Second Five Year Plan.
10. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 25-5-1921.
11. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 16-2-1934.
12. *Ibid.*, 24-8-1947.
13. Speech in the Constituent Assembly on 8-3-1949.

K. K. Pillay

GANDHIJI AND SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

One aspect of the greatness of Gandhiji is seen in his championship of apparently conflicting aims of social reconstruction. On the one hand, he held fast to the Hindu traditional system of *varṇāśrama dharma*, while on the other, he protested vehemently against the age long custom of untouchability. He thought, unlike several others, that these two objectives were not contradictory to each other.

Varṇāśrama Dharma

Mahatma Gandhi imported a new meaning and significance to the *varṇāśrama* system and held that the four-fold classification based on hereditary occupation was at once a true socialism and a law of spiritual economics. For those who thought that this is undemocratic and that career would not be always open to talents, his reply was that there was scope for individuals of ability to rise in eminence in their allotted sphere of duties. His contention was that *varṇāśrama dharma,* based upon a hereditary division of labour was a universal law governing the human family. He thought that *varṇāśrāma dharma* is a lesson and an ideal for the rest of the world. According to him "*varṇa* is the Law of Man's Being, and therefore, is as necessary for Christianity and Islam as it has been necessary for Hinduism and has been its savings." He added: "I have not hesitated to consider *Varṇāśrama Dharma* as a gift of Hinduism to mankind. Acceptance of that *dharma* is, so far as I have been able to see it, a condition of spiritual growth." His focus of attention was on the advancement and cultural progress of the social unity as a whole. The individual's interests are to be subordinated to social development. This is what he meant when he wrote: "*Varṇāśrama* satisfies the religious needs, because a whole

community accepting the law is free to devote ample time to spiritual perfection. Observance of the law obviates social evil and entirely prevents the killing economic competition."

It is important to remember that he made a distinction between *varṇa* and caste. He held that "*varṇa* has nothing to do with caste. Caste is an excrescence upon Hinduism." The division into innumerable castes is, according to him an unwarranted liberty taken with the doctrine of *varṇāśrama dharma*.

Is there any scope for interchangeability of occupations? His answer is in the negative. However, an individual is not to be prevented from resorting to another pursuit for a time influenced by personal liking, but not as a profession and as a means of earning his livelihood. According to Gandhiji "to say that a brahmin should not touch the plough is a parody of *varṇāśrama dharma* and a prostitution of the meaning of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. Surely the qualities predominantly ascribed to the different divisions are not denied to the others." This may seem to be paradoxical. But he made his position clear by stating that as a rule the transgression of occupational division is not desirable. "The only profession after his heart should be profession of his father", but adds that "it would be right for any brainy carpenter to become a lawyer for service, not for money." Gandhiji knew full well that the trends of the time were against his prescription. He himself admitted that "in an age where competition is held to be the Law of Life, and possession in the largest measure of the world's goods the *summum bonum*, and when everyone counts oneself free to follow any calling one likes, this attempt to hold *varṇa* as the Law of Life may well be regarded as an idle dream, and an attempt to revise it as a childish folly. Be that as it may, it is my firm conviction that it is true socialism." He adumbrated his ideal, while fully aware of its impracticality at present.

But his championship of the *varṇāśrama dharma* afforded no scope for the assumption of superiority of one *varṇa* over another He wrote: "All *varṇas* are equal, for the community depends no less on one than on another. Today *varṇa* means gradations of high and low. It is hideous travesty of the original." Gandhiji roundly condemned the modern caste with its arrogant exclusiveness. Service of all to the society is the ideal he prescribed. "A brahmin is he who is the servant of all, even of the *śūdras* and the untouchables. He alone is a *kṣatriya* who uses the whole of himself for the defence and honour of society." Thus, service, no less than character, entitles persons to occupy their position in the respective *varṇas*.

He stated that brahmins as a class have suffered degradation and added that, if they had not, and if they had lived up to their profession, Hinduism would not be in the degraded state in which it is at present. He draws pointed attention to the words of Yudhishtira in the *Mahābhārata* : "Truth, charity, forgiveness, good conduct, gentleness, austerity and mercy, where these are seen, O! King of Serpents! there is a Brahmin. If these marks exist in a *Śūdra* and are not in a *Dvija, the Śūdra* is not a *Śūdra*, nor the Brahmin Brahmin."

The removal of untouchability: Little wonder that the abominable custom of untouchability provoked his vehement opposition. The annihilation of untouchability and unapproachability constituted an important element of his missionary work. A more effective pronouncement on this question could have been made than when he said: "I feel more than even, that if untouchability lives, Hinduism dies." He spoke with the zeal of a prophet. He was up against age-old but irrational tradition,, vested interest, religious fanaticism, hide-bound conservatism, ignorance and superstition. It is amazing that in spite of it all, his efforts were crowned with a remarkable success.

There appeared a controversy among leaders as to whether untouchability was sanctioned by the *śāstras*. Gandhiji felt that "there is no such thing as untouchability by birth in the *Śāstras*." But, some, as for instance, Sri R. Krishnaswami Aiyar of Tirunelveli justified untouchability in support, of which he quoted *Manu Dharmaśāstra, Gautama Dharmaśastra, Vyāghrapāda and Bṛhaspati.* Though Gandhiji did not claim mastery of the *Śāstrs*, he professed to understand the secret of Hinduism and he did not hesitate to describe "untouchability as practised today a Satanic activity." He added that he *Gītā* teaches us that members of all the four castes should be treated on an equal basis. He said: "I believe in the doctrine of equality as taught by Lord Krishna in the *Gītā*. The *Gītā* teaches us that members of all the four castes should be treated on an equal basis. It does not prescribe the same *dharma* for the brahmin as for the bhangi. But it insists that the latter should be entitled to the same measure of consideration and esteem as the former with all his superior learning. It is, therefore, our duty to see that untouchables do not feel that they are despised and looked down upon."

Apparently conflicting as *varṇāśrama dharma* and the removal of untouchability may seem, he saw no irreconcilability between the two, in spite of several critics pressing on him the contrary view.

In fact, the courage of his conviction is nowhere seen so strikingly as on this question. His supreme contempt or cheap popularity in disregard of sincere convictions is nowhere reflected better than in this.

But he was not a visionary. If there were to be a conflict between *varṇāśrama dharma* and untouchability, as was indicated to him by several critics, he was perfectly clear in his preference. Said he: "If *varṇāśrama* goes to the dogs in the removal of untouchability, I shall not shed a tear."

Nor was his attitude towards the removal of untouchability negative in character. It was followed by the agitation for Temple entry and the opening of public wells, educational institutions etc. for all irrespective of caste or colour. This scheme of Harijan uplift was calculated to elevate the position of the Harijans in all sphere of social activity. Vigourous writing appeared continuously in '*Young India*,' championing the cause of Temple entry and Harijan uplift. The principal theatre of the struggle was Travancore, in places like Quilon and Vaikom. Kerala was for ages the stronghold of untouchability and unapproachability of the most abominable type. Gandhiji was intent on securing a real conversion of heart on the part of the caste Hindus. Simultaneously he induced the Government of the State to legalise Temple entry. At first he was opposed to the idea of employing *Satyāgraha* for securing Temple entry, for his conviction was that those who resort to *satyāgraha* must be actuated by perfect sincerity and nobility of purpose. But eventually he was obliged to employ it because, as he said, "*satyāgraha* is the most powerful process of conversion. It is an appeal to the heart." Finally the struggle resulted in the Temple Proclamation of Travancore in 1936. Doubtless this was a great victory for the cause and a landmark in the history of Hinduism; but it formed only the beginning of the struggle in the rest of India. This was but a mile-stone in the uplift of the Harijans.

Gandhiji was strongly against the perpetuation of separate schools and separate institutions for the exclusive benefit of the Harijans, even as he was against separate electorates, for the simple reason that these well-intentioned projects would tend to perpetuate separatism and a permanent status of inferiority for the Harijans. "Do not segregate Harijans to Cheris. Allow them to appear in all places," was his clarion call for the eradication of isolationism and a sense of inferiority.

The noble work begun by Mahatma Gandhi, and carried on by many followers and supported by Governments in Independent

India, has led to substantial results. But much more remains to be achieved in the direction of removing untouchability. It is significant that as recently as August 31, 1968 Shri Jagajivan Ram, the Hon'ble Minister for Food and Agriculture in the Union Government,, was obliged to call upon the scheduled castes and tribes to carry on their struggle for securing an honourable place in society. He stated: "It is not true that untouchability is practised in villages only. It is practised in Delhi itself. Right in the Secretariat, they keep *Surahis* (earthenware containers) exclusively for the Harijans." This reveals how Gandhiji has only laid the foundations for the eradication of an evil which has persisted for ages.

Interdining and Intermarriage: Naturally Gandhiji with his ambition of abolishing untouchability would have been expected to encourage interdining and intermarriage. But it is curious to observe that he was not enthusiastic about popularising these pieces of social reform. His contention was that they do not solve the problem so long as faulty notions of superiority and inferiority among castes persist. His idea was that the real cure for the malady lies in a sincere change of heart among the people. A real and not a formal spirit of equality should be the aim. He said "I would neither object to nor advocate participation in international or cosmopolitan dinner, for the simple reason that such functions do not necessarily promote friendship or goodwill."

Occasionally we find Gandhiji making palpably contradictory statements on this question. Once asked whether interdining and intermarriages are necessary for the removal of untouchability, he replied, "No and Yes, No because they are matters of individual concern, Yes, because if a person refused to take food touched by another person on the ground of untouchability or inferiority, he is observing untouchability." In fact, there was a certain measure of flexibility in his views on interdining and intermarriage. He himself states: "At one time I did say that interdining was not an essential part of the campaign for the removal of untouchability. Personally I was for it. Today I encourage it. In fact, today I even go further." Regarding intermarriage, at one time, he said that it is desirable that Caste Hindu girls should select Harijan husbands. But, as stated earlier, his views on these questions did not get petrified into immutable prescriptions. His confession of inconsistency in respect of certain views like his confession of his so-called 'Himalayan blunders' is characteristic of his utter frankness. He wrote thus with perfect candour: "When anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the latter of the two on the same

subject." Apparently he must have felt, though he has not stated it anywhere, that consistency for its own sake, is the hobgoblin of little minds.

Women's place in society: His views regarding the position of woman are typically Gandhian. On the one hand he protested aginst the view attributed to many that "for woman there can be no freedom." On the other hand, he was against women competing with men in all walks of life. His conviction was that the 'home' is her proper sphere, which she has to ennoble by devoted attention to her legitimate duties. The Indian ideal of womanhood can be cherished and the healthy development of Indian culture was promoted only by this division of labour. While, therefore, he held that the woman's rights should not be invaded and that she is the queen, not the slave, of the household over which she presided, 'Gandhiji wanted women to eschew competition with men in the field of public employment. On this matter opinions may differ, and the modern tendency among educated women is against his prescription. But quite a large number of women in India still follow the traditional ideal which Gandhiji advocated.

It is no surprise that the unfortunate degradation of some women resorting to immoral ways of earning a living was stoutly opposed by him. He was against the dedication of girls to prostitution which became common among the Devadasis associated with the temple from medieval times.

Vegetarianism, Prohibition etc.: Both by precept and by example Mahatma Gandhi was a champion of vegetarianism In his writings he emphasised the supreme merit of vegetarianism from the stand-point of physical and mental well-being and advocated it with his characteristic fervour. More important was his crusade in the cause of Prohibition. He wrote and spoke vehemently against the demon of drink. The importance of prohibition in his scheme of social reconstruction cannot be overrated. Prohibition is now enforced by law in several States in India, and although there are limitations to the efficacy of legislation on a social evil which had prevailed over ages, much good has resulted from it. Despite temptations on the part of several legislators to give up prohibition in order to improve the finances of governments, it seems that on the whole prohibition has come to stay. Doubtless Gandhiji's emphasis on prohibition is one of his lasting contributions to the social regeneration of India. The evils of the drink habit can hardly be exaggerated, and the physical, mental and moral tone of the people are bound to be improved

through a sustained policy of prohibition, supported by the sincere co-operation of the people.

Swadeshism, Spiritualism etc.: Gandhiji's passion was to inculcate wholesome habits among the people. Personal cleanliness was greatly valued and stressed by him, simplicity of personal dress became a creed with him, advocated no less on hygienic than on economic grounds. The poverty of our country, and in particular, the inability of India to produce the entire cloth required by the Indians prompted him to restrict himself to the use of loin cloth and to advocate Khadi for all people. Whether the economic basis of khaddar is sound or not, Gandhiji's championship of khaddar was closely connected with his desire to inculcate the love or *Swadeshi* or indigenous commodities among the people of India. The agitation for the boycott of British goods was as much political as social in its motivation. Gandhiji's passion for the indigenous things stemmed from his love of the traditional culture of the country. He denounced the irrational and ridiculous imitation of Westernism by Indians in respect of clothing and the daily habits of life. What a marvellous change this attitude has brought in the outlook of the educated Indian, in particular in the matter of sartorial patterns, is worthy of note.

Mahatma Gandhi's contempt for Westernism was coupled with his antipathy towards materialism. He declared unequivocally thus: "I am not enamoured of the materialism of the West. It almost seems as though God in His Wisdom had prevented India from progressing along those lines so that it might fulfil its special mission of resisting the onrush of materialism." At the heart of hearts he was yearning for the India of old, with its traditional simplicity, dominated by spiritualism. How far these ideals would be feasible in the present age of machinery is a matter of serious doubt. But this pet aspiration of his has commendable elements in it and has influenced the life and thought of numerous people.

Hindu Muslim Unity: Though an ardent Hindu and a devoted *sanātanist*, Gandhiji was an Indian first and an Indian last. His spiritualism was not inconsistent with his advocacy of secularism in politics. His vision of India was based on Hindu-Muslim unity and on perfect concord of all the communities in the country. In respect of social reconstruction in India, the promotion of Hindu-Muslim understanding and co-operation was a vital factor. He could never countenance the idea of a partition of India; unfortunately his failure to avert it was a sore thing which affilicted him in the last stage of his life. In fact, from the early days of his

political activity he attached supreme importance to the maintenance of Hindu-Muslim unity. He considered it as one of the three pillars of *swaraj;* the other two were the propagation of khadi and the removal of untouchability.

Gandhiji has had admirers and critics both in India and outside. None denies that some of his ideas regarding social reconstruction have been severely opposed. But when the sum total of his impact is considered, it is the barest truth to say that he is unrivalled in his influence on modern India, in the social, no less than in the political sphere.

V. Raghavan

TRADITIONAL ROOTS OF SOME LEADING GANDHIAN IDEAS AND IDEALS

For those of us who have lived in the full blaze of the sunlight of Gandhiji, his person, words and doings,—on all of which there has been a great deal of writing, discussion and exposition, there cannot be any unknown aspects which could be brought to light today. Any glow or depth or dimension which we try, again and again, to give to his ideas or words will be in the measure of our own increasing awareness of and participation in the significance of those ideas or words. Gandhiji himself forswore any novelty. If his life and teachings formed a *Bhāṣya*, or perhaps a *Vārtika* on the fundamental concepts of Hinduism, we can only add some foot-notes, *Tippaṇas*. Like many of the modern educated Indians, who became intellectually displaced, Gandhi was not originally a student or exponent of Hinduism. As one born to it, and because of the domestic background, there were of course submerged seeds of Hinduism down below in his being. But when the intellectual ferment took place, there were other influences of Tolstoy and Ruskin and of the Sermon on the Mount. It was not until he was in England that he was introduced to the *Gitā*, in Edwin Arnold's translation by Theosphist friends; it was through the Theosphical movement that he felt stimulated to read books on Hinduism. Just as he belied the hopes of his Theosophist friends in England that he would join their Society, so also in South Africa, he disappointed Mr Baker, Mr Walton, Rev. Murray and Abeulla Sheth who had fondly hoped for his embracing Christianity or Islam. The leters of Raychandbhai called upon him to study more deeply Hinduism of which he (Ray-thought of Hinduism." He now read some Advaita classics, chandbhai) said "no other religion has the subtle and profound *Pañikaraṇa* and part of the *Yogā-vācṣiṣṭa* and Haibada and Suri's Compendium on different schools of Indian philosophy. He even records that some of the books on the Bible or the Koran which were given to him for reading that time seemed to him to support

Hinduism.[1] Other comparative studies followed in Buddhism and in the saying of Zarathustra and simultaneously more readings of *Upaniṣads* and of the writings of Max Muller. "All this", Gandhi says "enhanced my regard for Hinduism and its beauties began to grow upon me."[2]

Gandhi thus definitely stated his position vis a vis Christianity: 'Today my position is that, though I admire much in Christianity, I am unable to identify myself with orthodox Christianity. I must tell you in all humility that Hinduism as I know it entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being, and I find a solace in the *Bhagavadgītā* and the *Upaniṣads* that I miss even in the Sermon on the Mount. Not that I do not prize the idea presented therein, not that some of the precious teachings in the Sermon on the Mount have not left a deep impression upon me, but I must confess to you that when doubt haunts me, when disappointment stares me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the *Bhagavadgītā* and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of external tragedies; and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teaching of the *Bhagavadgītā*'. In "*My Soul's Agony*" he said: "I have no other wish in this world but to find light and joy and peace through Hinduism". He even went to the extent of referring to Hinduism by its name *Sānātana Dharma*, the Eternal Religion and to himself as a *Sanatani* Hindu. He said "I claim myself to be a *sanātanist* ... ... For me *Sanātana Dharma* is the vital faith handed down from generations belonging even to the pre-historic times and based upon the Vedas and the writings that followed them .... These books are themselves the remnants of the discourse left by unknown seers. Those of later generations added to these original treasures according to their own lights. Then arose a great and loftyminded man, the composer of the *Gītā*, who gave to the Hindu world a synthesis of Hindu religion ...... And I claim to be a *sanatanist* because for forty years I have been seeking literally to live up to the teachings of that book."

The *Bhagavadgītā*, referred to in the above statements of Gandhi, became as he said his 'dictionary of daily reference' and he called it 'Mother', 'Kāmadhenu' and 'Opensesame'. The 19 verses describing the *sthitaprajna*—'one of established mind', he said has been inscribed on the tablet of his heart; 'they contained for me all knowledge that truths they teach are the external verities.' With Tilak and Aurobindo, he became the third great modern commentator on the *Gītā*. He referred to the *anāsākti-yoga* or Gospel of disinterested action as having given him a key as it were to the secret of

public work and its success; he had understood the correct legal implication of trusteeship from this *Gītā* doctrine His ideal public worker is the *karmayogin* and *sthitaprañа* of the *Gītā*. Gandhi wrote "A public servant has no personal feelings to be considered... ...He must be *tulya-nindātmasamstutiḥ*,"[4] Together with the *Gītā*, the opening verse of *Īśavāsyopaniṣad* which he called the golden key, made a tremendous impact on him and he exclaimed that even if all the *Upaniṣads* and all other scriptures too, were lost this one verse of the first *Upaniṣad* was enough to make Hinduism live for ever.

It is thus clear that it is in the framework of Hinduism that Gandhi can be fully understood. In the obituary tribute to Gandhiji, the London Times said "No country but India and no religion but Hinduism could have given birth to a Gandhi." In his 'Gandhi Lives' Merg Edmund Jones observes: 'A knowledge of Hindu thought becomes the sole frame of reference in which Gandhi's contribution to the world can be at all understood......"[5]

In the sequal we shall consider some of the leading ideas of Gandhi in their historical roots, in most cases, go as far back as the Vedas themselves. While so considering, we will also find that Gandhi gave them an extended explanation and application to the times and the situation. A recent writer who had participated in Vinoba Bhave's Bhudan movement, Tuvia Gelblum at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem said in his article 'Gandhi—Saint or politician' (in the *New Outlook*): "It is a traditional Hindu characteristic neither to reject new ideas nor to relinquish old ones, but rather to absorb the new ideas within a re-interpretation of the old. This is evident in Gandhi's teaching and above all in his terminology. He often employed potent traditional concepts, infusing them with new meaning."[6]. Disclaiming any desire to found a new sect, Gandhi himself said "I do claim to throw a new light on many an old truth."[7] It is through such interpretation and throwing of fresh light on the ancient truths that Hinduism has persisted through the centuries. Answering the criticism that he was forcing any text or concept of Hinduism, Gandhi said "I have endeavoured in the light of a prayerful study of the other faiths of the world, and what is more, in the light of my own experiences in trying to live the teaching of Hinduism as interpreted in the *Gītā*, to give an extended but in no way strained meaning to Hinduism, not as buried in its ample scriptures, but as a living faith speaking like a mother to her aching child. What I have done is perfectly historical. I have followed the footsteps of our forefathers."[8]

'Any way I must disclaim any intention of straining the meaning of Hinduism or the *Gītā* to suit any preconceived notions of mine.

My notions were an outcome of a study of the *Gitā*, the ***Ramayana***, the *Mahābharata* and the *Upaniṣads* etc."

At the International Gandhi Seminar in Delhi in January 1953, Prof. Massignon of the Paris University emphasised the need to understand the keywords of Gandhian thought in their historical depth. He said of Gandhiji that 'he discovered the real meaning of traditional words' and illustrated with one of these, *VRATA*. Even during the South African stage, Gandhi had started on the vows, chiefly *Brahmacarya*. Later when he founded his *Āśrama* on the Sabaramati he laid down the *Vratas* or vows which the inmates of his *Āśrama* should take. *Vrata* is an ancient basic word in the Vedas. It signified the practical aspect of the perception of *Ṛta*, the divine, or cosmic order or law; *Vrata* is acting in conformity to it. It grew in its significance to embrace all acts of an elevating character, all austerities for the sake of which one had to take oneself away from the lower preoccupations and dedicate himself completely for performing the higher act. Of vows and the need to keep them, Gandhi said: 'To do at any cost something that one ought to do constitutes a vow. It becomes a bulwork of strength ...... God is the very image of vows. God would cease to be God if he swerved from His own laws even by hair's breadth. The Sun is a great keeper of observances... ... We should therefore never doubt the necessity of vows for the purpose of self-purification and self-realisation.' The *Vājasaneya Saṁhita* 1.55 says: "O Agni, Lord of Vratas! I shall do this *Vrata;* let it bear fruit; here I am going to truth from untruth." "*Agne vratapate, vrataṃ cariṣyami, tan me radhyatam idam aham anṛtat satyam upaimi.*" It is from this fountainhead that the idea of moral vows that the Yoga Sutras of *Patañjaii* set forth flowed, as also all later *vradas* of losses and numerous forms which people of all walks of life observed, including fastings, propitiations of certain deities, figts etc. The *vratas* that attracted Gandhi are those of Patanjili. He did not envisage for his *Āśarmites* any physical yogic practices but insisted on their taking the vows described by Patañjal as Yamas *Ahimsā*, *Satya*, *Asteya*, *Brahmacarya* and *Aparigraha*. In his commentary on these, he took them in their fullest implication and largest sense. Thus *Satya* and *Ahiṁsā*, he lifted up to the highest plane, identifying them with his highest God and religion. *Satya*, is not only truth-speaking and truthfulness in thought, word and deed, but the highest name of God. *Ahiṁsā* is not merely not causing hurt to a being, it is refraining from any hurt by thought or illwill; it is love, it is detachment from one's flesh and attachment to Truth; *Ahiṁsā* is the path to Truth with which it is intertwined. Similarly *Brahmacarya* is not only abstaining from animal passion; it reaches up to all that conduct (*carya*) that is adopted to the search

of Brahman i.e. Truth. In one of his recent books entitled "Change and continuity in Indian Religion" Gonda the prolific Dutch Sanskritist cites among others the concept of *Brahmacarya* and Gandhi's exposition of it and points out how 'the important conception of *Brahmacarya*' is one more illustration of his thesis that terms of religious import have persisted from Vedic times and have neither disappeared from Hinduism nor have changed their meaning in any un-recognisable manner. Gonda also draws attention to another cardinal idea of Hinduism, the need and importance of Guru, handed down from Vedic times, and on which again he quotes this from Gandhiji : ' I believe in the Hindu theory of guru and his importance in spiritual realisation. I think there is a great deal of truth in the doctrine that true knowledge is impossible without a guru. '

His historic fasts illustrates the same extension of a traditional idea which was part and parcel of the ingrained Hindu habits. Regulation of diet as an exercise in restraint he had developed long before as an accessory to his vow of *Brahmacarya* ; control of the palate was one of Asrama vows. The starving of the senses, and more so of the tongue was part of yoga and tapas. What is *tapas* but Fasting par excellence—say the *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad. tapa iti tapo nānaśanāt param* (21.2) of all religious observances, fasting was a necessary accessary. When critics assailed him from all around, he appealed to the tradition of Hinduism and said "Fasting is an integral part of even the present day Hinduism. Hindu religious literature is replete with instances of fasting."

Refering to the early stages when Gandhi was developing this as an aid to self-restraint, he observed: 'Having been born in a Vaiṣṇava family and of a mother who was given to keeping all sorts of hard vows, I had observed, while in India the Ekadasi and other fasts . . . seeing that the friend I have mentioned was observing it (the fast) with benefit and with the hope of supporting the *Brahmacaraya* vow, I followed his example and began keeping the Ekadasī fast . . . The Gandhis used to observe not only the Vaiṣṇava but also the Saivite vows. Some of the members of the family used to observe *pradoṣa* in the whole of the month of *Shravan.* I decided to do likewise. ' (that is fasting until evening). Fasting, physical and as well as mental, he believed in, as a means of all round purification and ridding oneself of all passion and quoted in this connection the *Gitā* :

' I claim to be full to overflowing with the spirit of India undefiled' said Gandhi and refers to himself in the same context

as saturated with the spirit of Hinduism. When he discounts reason and proposed to rely on faith and intuition he is in line with the tradition of Hindu thought and philosophy which assigns a secondary place to reason. In this connection we may refer to a thing which naturally gave rise to controversies. Gandhi's claim to listen to his inner voice. Among the sources and proofs of *dharma*, Manu and other ancient authorities added to *śruti, and smṛti*, the conduct of the disciplined ones and one's own inner satisfaction. *Ātma-tuṣṭi* It is of course a dangerous thing and could be abused, but it is a *pramāṇa* only for those who by continuous correct behaviour have become attuned to right-doing, as were by instinct. It is in this way that Kalidasa makes us understand this principle through the mouth of Dusyanta who has first a doubt as to Sakuntala being fit to be married by him and then resolves the question by an appeal to his own inner self and says "as my noble mind has evinced a desire for her, she should be one fit to be married by me; for to good souls, when there is a doubt, the prompting and trend of their heart, the line they have instinctively taken, is the authority.

ṣatāmhi sandeha-padeṣu vastuṣu
pramāṇam antakkaraṇa-pravṛttayaḥ

Gandhi realised the basis on which this appeal to the inner voice could be made; for he said ' having made a ceaseless effort to attain self purification. I have developed some little capacity to hear correctly and clearly the "still small voice within."

Although an advaitin ultimately and a believer in the one formless and nameless God, Gandhi, as he himself said,could be a dvaitist. He realised not only for himself but for the people the need for personal gods and ways of worship. The chief circumctance which disarmed the bulk of his co-religionists in his declaration (1) the Vedas,*Upaniṣads, Purāṇas,* Ethics and all that goes by the name of Hindu scriptures (2) Avataras (3) Rebirth (4) *Varṇa* and *Āśrama* (5) Cowprotection and (6) idol-worship.

The *Gitā* his Kamadhenu, called *Japa the greatest Yajña;* and one of the most popular expressions of Gandhi's religious activity was his prayer meetings, recitation of hymns, *Bhajans, Rāmdhun,* recitation of *Ramā-Nāma* This one thing, of all, put him in time with Saints and Sadhus and Bhaktas ranging from Valmiki to the latest singer of Rāma-kīrtanas. In his article "Nothing without Grace", he said that God's grace could be obtained by repeating His name all the twenty four hours and by realising that God resided

within us. Along with Rāma Nāma, he mentioned also the *Dvādaśākṣara Mantra* as being equally efficacious but it was Rama Nama that was his favourite. With all devout Hindus, he believed in carrying Mantras which one should repeat and said 'The Mantra becomes one's staff of life." Quoting the great medical authority *Oaraka,* he believed that the recitation God's name was an aid to cure oneself of illness. He called *Rāma Nāma* "a sovereign remedy" and "an unfailing panacea of all ills." "Repetition of Rama Nāma" he said "has been a second nature with me with growing knowledge and advancing years". He was well-versed in the tradition and literature of the doctrine of recitation of God's name, for he says in one place, "but more potent than R ma is the Name"—which has reference, to a tenet of this school of Nāma-reciters that God had two real forms, the sound form or Name and his appearance (rupa) and that of thest two, the former is superior. In fact, we can compare some of his expositions on this subject to those of a traditional expounder of the greatness of *Na·nɔ—Nāma-māh: tmya*—like Tyagaraja; how the recitation of the Name should come from the heart, how Rama means the Supreme Godhead and so on which can be compared to songs like ' *Rama niyeda premarahitulaku namaruci telusuna, Telisi Rama cintanato Namamu—Rama yent parabrahmanunaku peru* ' and so on.

The question has been posed by several writers and publicists whether Gandhi was a Saint or Politician. He has himself answered it. Those orthodox Hindus who did not see eye to eye with him on several questions preferred to call him a politician and politicians to whom he was a regular problem and puzzle wished he confind himself to religion. It cannot be said that the Saints and Prophets did not come up against their contemporary political powers; Indian Avatars had always appeared at times of crises as members or kinsmen of royal families and had always sought the restoration of values and equilibrium by destroying the evil that was literally enthroned.

We referred to time honoured concepts of Hinduism receiving an expanded application at the hands of Gandhi. Hinduism always spoke of the various activities in the lives of persons as their Sadhanas for spiritual perfection, thus literature and the arts for writers and artists. In fact, according to the *Gītā*, Gandhi's 'Mother', all actions, done dispassionately and in a dedicatory spirit, amounted to a *yajña*, *yoga* and an *arcana*. So a field is required for one to practise his Yoga. If Gandhi could expand in scope, principles of Hinduism and if this was his special contribution, it was politics which gave him this scope. He said "I enter politics only so long as it develops the religious faculty in me."

In the traditional Indian scheme of values, *Artha* under which politics came, was to be controlled and subservient to the requirements of virtue and rightenousness *Dharma*, on one side, and the spiritual goal *Mokhṣa* on the other. *Manu*, *Vyāsa* and *Valmikt* repeatedly said that *Dharma* itself would yield all that one needs including *Artha*. Even *Kauṭilya* stresses *Dharma* and says in an unforgettable dictum at the outset in his *Arthaśāstra* that the whole science of politics is an exercise in self-control—"*Kritaman hsi śāstram indria jayaḥ*." The application therefore of religious principles or techniques to politics, which Gandhi made is not without the traditional background. So far as politics was concerned he wanted it to be based on spiritual values—on *Satya* and *Ahimsā*. Even as Rama his *ṛtadevata*, declared in the *Rāmāyaṇa* *satyam eva ānṛṣamsm ca rāja-vrttaṃ sanatanam.*"

"On truth and non-wickedness is the eternal conduct of a ruler based". Gandhi conceived of his ideal state as Ramarajya, because as Valmiki says of the latter, it was based on *Ahimsā*:

Rāmameve anupāśyantah nahyahimsan parasparam
"Always looking to Rama as their exemplar, the citizens of Rama refrained from harming each other." For his own part, for his experiments in the pursuit of truth his political work proved an excellent *sādhana*. Again and again he said: "My national service is part of my training for redeeming my soul from the bondage of flesh."[9] "So my patriotism is for me a stage in my journey to the land of freedom and peace."[10] On another occasion he said: "If I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics today encircles us like the coils of a snake . . . I am trying to introduce religion into politics." The imagery of Gandhiji here reminds us of the mighty Bhimasena caught in coils of the python-Ajāgara (which was King Nahusha in curse) and Bhima succeeding in releasing himself by his satisfactory replies to the normal and spiritual questions which the Python-Nahusa put to Bhima.

Uttiṣha narṣaśārdūlla hitvā etad dāruṇam vratam
puraʌaryam ita kṣipram Ayadhyām yahi Rāghava
(II. iii. 13, 14, 16-18

The *Satyāgraha* of Bharata did not succeed because of Rāma's stand being right and Bharata, being one with power, was not entitled to take to this. Another instance from the same epic is Rāma himself performing it to force the sea to give him way; Rāma failed because as the King of the seas said it is against the nature of waters, as

created by Almighty, to solidify or otherwise give up their nature and give passage for Rama and the monkey hoards. In the case of Gandhi, the *Satyāgraha* was correct according to the conditions governing *Prayopaveśa*, because the suffering party was powerless and the other party was in the wrong being the oppressor and exploiter.

After tracing the history of *Satya*, Truth, from the Vedic times, H. Zimmer, takes up the Gandhian application of its principle to politics in his *ṣatyāgraha*. He says: Mahatma Gandhi's program of *Satyāgraha*, 'holding (*agraha*), to the truth (*satya*) is an attempt to carry this ancient Indo-Aryan idea into play against what would seem to the eye to be the vastly superior powers of the highly mechanised, industrially supported, military and political equipments of the Anglo-Saxon's victorious machine of universal empire Gandhi's program of *Satpāgraha*, his national ' firm grasping of truth ', in strict adherence to the first principles of India's Yoga mastery, *ahimsā*, non-killing, non-violence, is a serious, very brave, and potentially vastly powerful modern experiment in the ancient Hindu science of transcending the sphere of lower powers by entering that of the higher. Gandhi is confronting Great Britain's untruth (*asatya*) with India's truth (*satya*), British compromise with Hindu holy dharma. This is a wizard priest-battle waged on the collosal modern scale and according to the principles derived from the text books, not of the Royal Military College, but of *Brahman*."

In the scheme of the four aims of life already referred to, Hindu thought assigned the highest place to the fourth, *Mokṣa*, spiritual release. It is the final yearning, the authentic last auguish, of all Hindus to be free from the bondage of flesh and life. In modern times, this ideal has come in for criticism at the hands of some western writers and Christian missionaries, and Indian writer and thinkers are not wanting who feel apolegetic about it. But who amongst us has been more modern than Gandhi and what did he say on this? Here is the true pulse-beat of the Hindu, authentic to his tradition and heritage: Gandhi said: "I am impatient to realise myself, to attain *mokṣa* in this very existence. My national service is part of my training for freeing my soul from the bondage of the flesh "[12] "What I want to achieve—what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years—is self-realisation, to see God face to face, to attain *Mokṣa*. All that I do by way of speaking and writing and all my ventures in the political field, are directed to this same end." [13] Again "If I have any passionate desire, it is only to reach God, if possible, at a hump, to merge myself in Him. "

Gandhi had his differences with Tagore but had his own acthetics. Through his Swadeshi movement a great revival of native

handicrafts took place. He had a deep love for and perception of the richness of Indian Culture. We may cite two extracts from his writings. " It is my firm opinion that no culture has treasures so rich as ours has ..." [24]

"I want the culture of all the lands to be blown about my house, as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any." [15]

Among these cultural values he did not fail to include Sanskrit. Realising as he did the importance of classics like the *Gītā*, he held " that every Hindu boy and girl must acquire knowledge of Sanskrit arises." [16] He wrote: " I regard the education of any Hindu child as incomplete unless he has some knowledge of Sanskrit". Earlier, to be able to express himself in that language whenever an occasion pointing out the significance of *stotras* and *Mantras*, he said, "There is much therefore to be said for the retention of the old Sanskrit formulae for the most prevalent *mantras* or verses." [17]

In his ultimate belief, he was an Advaitin. He declared " I do not regard God as a person " and " I am an advaitist and yet can support dvaitism. He repeated the Name Rama, but held that this, as also the thousand Names in the *Vishṇusahasranāma* hymn do not exhaust the Names of God. " You may give him as many names as you like, provided it is the one God without second, whose Name you are invoking. That also means that He is Nameless too. " ' Who is the Rām of your Ramdhun? asked many and he had no hesitation saying: " I have accepted all the names and forms attributed to God, as symbols connoting one formless omnipresent Rama. " Gandhi had evidently in his mind what all devotees of Rama had in mind, what the *Rāmapūrvatāpanī Upaniṣad said* —

' Ramante yogino mante nityānande cidātmant /
iti Rāmāpadenasau param Brahmābhidhīyate//.

An answer which he said was not his own but of Tulasidas himself. To the question could non-Hindus join Ramdhun, he replied "My Rama, the Rama of our prayers is not the historical Rama, the son of Dasaratha the King of Ayodhya. He is the eternal, the unborn, the one without a second.. [18]

This belief in the one truth, called by diverse names by the wise, is, so to say, the fundamental and tonic note, the *Ādhāra śrui*, on which Hinduism has harped from the times of the *ṚgVeda*. In the classical and medieval times this *Ekam Sat* comprehended among those

who spoke of it diversely *(Bahudhā Vadanti)* adherents of various paths within Hinduism, as also of Buddhism and Jainism. In more recent times, to saints like Kabir and Nanak, they inclued the followers of the Phophet and in modern times, to Ramakrishna and Gandhi, the followers of the Cross also. This is the basis of several characteristic Hindu attitudes relevant particularly in modern times, tolerance, respect for other religions, non-belief in conversion and acceptance of the good in other faiths, seeing their underlying unity and holding the view that all are paths to the same goal. Therefore this essential Hindu belief Gandhi pressed into service whenever he had to explain to correspondents or interviewers why he preferred Hinduism or in what its value lay. To quote him : "On examination I have found it (Hinduism) to be most tolerant of religions known to me. Its freedom from dogma makes a forcible appeal to me inasmuch as it gives the votary the largest scope for self-expression. Not being an exclusive religion, it enables them to admire and assimilate whatever may be good in other faiths... " To Dr. S. Radhakrishna's question, in the book on *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, "What is your religion? " Gandhi's answer is "My religion in Hinduism which for me is religion of Humanity and includes the best of all religions known to me". In another place we find him saying: "I believe in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world". The following imagery of his is well-known : " For me the different religions are beautiful flowers from the same garden or they are branches of the same majestic tree". Gandhi wrote "In my opinion the beauty of Hinduism lies in its all embracing inclusiveness. What the divine author of the *Mahābhārata* said of his great creation is equally true of Hinduism; what of substance is contained in any other religion is always to be found in Hinduism. And what is not contained in it is unsubstantial or unnecessary." [19]

The verse of Vyāsa that Gandhi had in his mind is :

yadihāsti tadanyatra, yannehāsti na tat kvacit

He compared Hindu dharma to a bounteous ocean teeming with priceless gems and added "the deeper you dive, the more treasures you find."

Some of these precious gems he himself brought out in his experiments with truth during his life and work, the most precious of these being the gem of this mutual understanding.

In *Young India* of 24th November 1927, Gandhi stated that "Hinduism is by no means a spent force" and he himself was one of

the most powerful among those who added the momentum to Hinduism in modern times.

At the recent Spiritual Summit Conference in Calcutta, I had occasion to speak upon the relevance of Hinduism to modern times. Now at this Seminar, I would like to say how by his interpretation and application in the extended fields of national and international matters, Gandhi reinforced the relevance of the core-concepts of Hinduism to the thoughtful amongst us of modern times.

It is these traditional traits in Gandhi's personality, his teachings and doings that accounted for his mass-appeal. Traditionally the people of the country had been fascinated with these ideals of devotion, ascticism and spirituality. There is no doubt that they will in course of time to time appeared in different parts of the country and by moving among them and touching their hearts with their moral exhortations, selfless service and dedicated life of poverty and piety, have constantly kept the sea of Hinduism billowing in its hightide. It is these loving, admiring and adorning masses who, following their traditional instincts, invested him with the time-honoured name *Mahātma*.

A verse quoted in the *Candamaharosanatantra* says that he is a Great Man—*Mahān*---who is learned, brave, engaged in penance, of unceasng application and one who works wonders, as it were:

> *Vidvān śūraḥ tapasvī Matasahaḥ ca viryavān/*
> *Adbhutasyā ca kartā hi MAHĀN ityabhahiyate//*

A wel-known *Subhāsita* states that unity in thought word and deed is the mark of great souls—*Mahātmans :*

In the *Gitā* the Lord says "they are the Great Souls—*Mahātmans*, who are blessed with divine endowments and who with knowledge of me as the imperishable cause of the hole creation, worship me with a mind not distracted by anything else:

> "*Mahātmanas tu mān Pārtha daivīm prakritim āśritāḥ/*
> *bhajanā—manasah jhtva bhutādim avyıyam//* "[20]

In an anonymous verse cited in the commentary on Dandin's *Kāvyadarśa* there is a regular definition of a *Mahān* which fully fits our Hero as Leader; the verse says: "he for whom there is nothing that he has to obtain for his own self and who is always exerting himself in the service of others—he is said to be a *Mahān*.

Avāptavyāni avāptani Yasya sarvaṇi dehinaḥ/
Paropakār vyasani sa Mahān abhidhīyate //

Last but not the least, is the line in the *Gītā* which sums up all that Gandhi meant as the complete implication and fulfilment of his vows of *Brahmacarya, Satya and Ahimsa* and the Advaitic truth that he believed in namely the realisation of God in everything. Rare indeed is such a Mahātmā who has had the realisation " All this is Vāsudeva ".

"Vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa Mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ" [21]

To these we may add the following gloss on "Mahātma" by H. Zimmer.

"India, dreamy India, philosophical, unpractical, and hopelessly unsuccessful in the maintenance of her political freedom, has always stood for the idea that wisdom can be power if ((and this is an" if " that must be kept in mind) the wisdom permeates, transforms, controls, and molds the whole of the personality. The sage is not to be a library of philosophy stalking about on two legs, an encyclopedia with a human voice. Thought itself is to be converted in him into life, into flesh, into being into a skill in act. And then the higher his realization, the greater will be his power. The magic of Mahatma Gandhi is to be understood, for example, in this way. The force of his model presence on the Hindu masses derives from the fact that in him is expressed an identity of ascetic wisdom (as a style of existence) with politics (as an effective attitude toward worldly issues, whether of daily life or of national policy). His spiritual stature is expressed and honoured in the title bestowed upon him: Mahatma: ' Whose essence of being is great, ' ' he in whom the supra-personal, supra-individual divine essence, which pervades the whole universe and dwells within the microcosm of the human heart as the animating grace of God (*ātman*), has grown to such magnitude as to have become utterly predominant (*Mahat*).' The Spiritual Person has swallowed and dissolved in him all graces of ego, all the limitations proper to personal individuation, all those limiting, fettering, qualities and propensities that belong to the normal human state, and even every trace remaining from ego-motivated deeds (*karma*) whether good or evil, whether derived from this life or from deeds in former births. Such traces of personality bias and distort a man's outlook on worldly affairs and prevent his approach to divine truth. But the Mahatma is the man who has become transformed in his being through wisdom; and the power of such a presence to work magic we may yet to see."[22]

1. M. K. Gandhi : *My Experiments with Truth,* Navjivan, 1957.
2. *Ibid.,* p. 115.
3. *Ibid.,* p. 144
4. M. K. Gandhi : *Harijan,* 15-12-1933.
5. Merg Edmund : *Gandhi Lives,* Philadelphia, 1948, p. 146.
6. Turia Gelblum : *Gandhi—Saint or Politician.*
7. M. K. Gandhi : *Young India,* 25-8-1921.
8. M. K. Gandhi : *Harijan,* 3-10-1936.
9. M. K. Gandhi : *Young India,* 3-4-1924.
10. *Ibid.*
11. H. Zimmer : *Philosophies of India,* pp. 169-172.
12. M. K. Gandhi : *My Mission,* 3-4-1924.
13. M. K. Gandhi : *My Experiments with Truth, Op.Cit.*
14. M. K. Gandhi : *Young India,* 1-8-2.
15. *Ibid.,* 1-6-21.
16. M. K. Gandhi : *Young India,* 15-12-1927.
17. *Ibid.,* 10-6-192.
19. M. K. Gandhi : *Young India,* 17-9-1965.
20. *Ibid.,* 9.13.
21. Gītā 7.19.
22. H. Zimmer : *Philosophies of India,* pp. 65-66.

K. Rajaratnam

THE INDUSTRIAL STATE AND GANDHI

Under a scheme of planned socialism, India has opted for modernism, modernism is identical with industrialism, that is, application of Science and Technology to press the material and human resources of the country into the service of society. The Industrial West at our express demand is pouring its machines and technical know-how, into our country to modernise the methods and quicken the pace of production and increase the volume of goods and services. Ere long, say after a few more five year plans, we hope to catch up with any advanced society in productivity levels both on land and in the factory. We have undoubtedly opened the gates of industrialism in India.

But to-day we are thinking of industrialism in the context of Gandhism, the message of the man who struggled for the liberation of India which reflected concern not only for political liberation from imperial bondage but also for cultural liberation from the material industrial civilisation of the West. For, Gandhiji saw imperialism and materialism were identical with industrialism. However, set as we are, on the road to industrialisation, let us hope that the incence and myrrh that we offer to Mahatma Gandhi to-day may not be a second burial of the person by paying wholesome tribute to him and forget him for the next one hundred years, as the next ceremonial occasion to think of him again would be the bi-centenial celebration of his birth!

It is not with certain amount of trepidation that any one would attempt the interpretation of the mind of the Mahatma. We should concede that Gandhiji had taken upon himself a tremendously difficult task of setting the country politically free and simultaneously build or rebuild the Indian society on foundation of indigenous tradition, religion and culture and evolve a socio-economic system that would contain the indigenous ways of life and value system.

With deep convictions of his own, on matters such as these, he had to enlist the support of heterogenous elements both within and without the country for the fight against the British rule. His pronouncements on all matters therefore, while reflecting his own convictions had to assure his several followers as well as critics that he was not advocating the liquidation of any particular way of life, at any rate violently. For this very important reason, his many statements appear to be contradictory and inconsistent. All great men of the world, especially those who were leaders of revolutions, violent or non-violent, and were making history, had necessarily to operate under this serious limitation of trying to carry with them all the heterogenous elements in pursuance of a great goal. As rightly stated by Nehru, therefore, Mahatma Gandhi's personality and convictions should not be judged merely by the several statements he had made. Gandhiji, Nehru stated, was a bigger personality than what his own statements indicate. John Gunther, a great friend of India and an admirer of Mahatma Gandhi, referring to many of Gandhiji's equivocal statements wrote of him — "He is a slippery fellow — I mean no disrespect."[1] I myself mean no dis-respect in quoting this author but am doing it to emphasise the need to remember the political context in which a saintly man had to operate and that the apparent contradictions and inconsistencies of Gandhiji's statements, should not be used against him.

It is true Gandhiji was not a economist in the modern sense of the term. But as far as the modern industrial state was concerned, Gandhiji's views and concern were clear and firm. All his pronouncements on economic matters could be bundled up into two categories. (1) His firm opposition to the Machine Age. (2) His conviction in the superiority of the simple Indian way of life over the Western industrial civilisation. In fact, he lived rigorously up to these convictions and indeed that was the core of his personality and greatness. Of all his writings, a small book, the *Hind Swaraj* or *India Home Rule* written in 1908 is the truest reflection of his passion for the Indian system of life and its values and his very deep concern to save India from putting on the modern material garbs of life. He was a great missionary of the Indian civilisation. One agrees with Lord Lothian who said that "all that Gandhiji was teaching lay in the gem, in that little book (*Hind Swaraj*) which deserved to be read and re-read in order to understand Gandhi properly."[2] Although this book was written in 1908, subsequently, that is, even in 1938, he was assuring many of his shocked readers of this book that he would not withdraw anything he said in that book. In a message dated July 14th 1938, on the occasion of the publication of the English edition of *Hindi Swaraj*, he said "I might change the languag here and there if I had to re-write the booklet. But after the stormy

thirty years through which I have since passed, I have seen nothing to make me alter the views expounded."[3]

The Economic System of Gandhiji :

Now let us see in Gandhiji's own words the kind of socio-economic civilisation he wanted to build in India. "I believe that the civilisation India has evolved is not to be beaten in the world. Nothing can equal the seeds sown by our ancestors. Rome went. Greece shared the same fate. The might of the Pharoes was broken. Japan has become westernised. Of China, nothing can be said. But India is still somehow or other sound at the foundation. India, as so many writers have shown, has nothing to learn from any body else and this is as it should be. We notice that the mind is a restless bird, the more it gets, the more it wants and still remains unsatisfied. The more we indulge our passions, the more unbridled they become. Our ancestors therefore set a limit to our indulgences. They saw that happiness was largely a mental condition. A man is not necessarily happy because he is rich, or unhappy because he is poor. The richer often seem to be unhappy, the poor to be happy. Millions will always remain poor. Observing all this, our ancestors dissuaded us from luxuries and pleasures. We have managed with the same kind of plough as existed thousands of years ago. We have retained the same kind of cottages that we had in former times and our indigenous system of education remains the same as before. We have had no system of life corroding completion. Each followed his occupation or trade and charged a regulation wage. It was not that we did not know how ot invent machinery but our forefathers knew that if we set our hearts after such things, we would become slaves and lose our moral fibre. They, therefore, after due deliberation decided that we should only do what we could with our hands and feet. They saw that our real happiness and health consisted in the proper use of our hands and feet. They further reasoned that large cities were snare and a useless encumbrance and that people would not be happy in them, that there would be gangs of thieves and robbers, prostitution and vice flourishing in them and that poor men would be robbed by rich men. They were, therefore, satisfied with small villages. They saw that kings and their swords were inferior to the sword of ethics and they therefore held the sovereigns of the earth to be inferior to the *Ṛṣhis* and *Fakirs*. A nation with a constitution like this is fitter to teach others than to learn from others. This nation had courts, lawyers and doctors. But they were all within bounds. The common people lived independently and followed their agricultural occupation. They enjoyed true Home Rule. And where this cursed modern civilisation has not reached, India remains as it was before. I would certainly advise you and those like you who love

the mother land to go into the interior that has not yet been polluted by the railways and to live there for six months. You might then be patriotic and speak of Home Rule. Now you see what I consider to be real civilisation. Those who want to change conditions such as I have described are enemies of our country and are sinners."[4]

Several of his observations over the next thirty to forty years were merely restatement and explanation of the theses contained in the forging model of Indian economy.

Gandhiji's opposition to industrialism and his alternative:

The following were his reasons for opposing the Machine age:

(1) "In the industrial civilisation, machine dominated the economy. Gandhiji insisted that man should be the centre of life and of all the processes of production and distribution, the machine seems to be possessed of a will or genius of its own. It is antagonistic to man's labour. Thus it tends to displace man."[5]

(2) Gandhiji was opposed to the machine because it widened and perpetuated economic inequalities. "To supress and exploit millions the machine is the device par excellence. It has no place in man's economy if, as social units all men are to be equal."[6]

(3) He was opposed to the machine again for the reason that it contracted labour time and expanded leisure time. According to him a small section of the community working through the machines producing goods for the total community or the entire community working through the machines just for an hour or two a day and producing all the goods necessary for the society leaving the rest of the day with nothing else to do, were both wrong. For, he believed, with Tolstoy in the fundamental law that every one must work for his bread and eat his bread by the sweet of the brow according to the Biblical injunction. So he prescribed an eight hour working day. He was not even prepared to introduce labour saving devices such as flush out should it mean idle hours for the scavengers.[7] Gandhiji believed that there was virtue in physical labour.[8]

(4) He was not prepared to improve the tools of production which would out grow the personality and control of man. He advised, therefore that production should not be mass production but it should be production by masses.[9]

(5) Simple tools necessarily involved that every person must employ himself or herself in the production of goods especially for the satisfaction of primary wants.

(6) Again these principles involved the limitation of wants and bringing under control the desire to possess more and newer goods. In the economic organisation therefore values like truth and non-violence, simple living and high thinking have an important place.

(7) To ensure a smooth and undisturbed course for this system of economy, Gandhiji's advises adherence to the *Varṇāśramadharama*. He avers that each individual must carry on the occupation of his fore fathers according to the *Varṇāśrṇmadharma*. While he is not prepared to accept the superiority of one class over the other, in a society so divided by *Varṇa*, Gandhiji insists that it is necessary and sound economics for society that individuals must carry on their father's occupation.[10] This is a safety for and a built-in resistance against a traditional society emerging as a modern society.

(8) This system of economy meant decentralisation of the d::ctive system and revival of self-sufficient village communities.[11]

(9) The basic industry was therefore to be agriculture providing employment to all the people and securing economic equilibrium, at of course, a (culturally) predetermined low level of supply and demand.[12]

(10) In terms of social and cultural values, in a non-industrial society, social relations are maintained on the basis of live, and let-live and strengthened family ties and there would be no exploitation of one group by the other. These are the characteristics of the Gandhian model of the socio-economic society of India ruling out machines except those like Charka and sewing machine. The happiness of man in Gandhiji's eeconomy can be summarised in Pope's poem:

> " Happy the man whose wish and care
> A few paternal acres bound. "

Inherent tendencies of Industrialism:

It is very clear that Gandhiji wanted to stem the tide of industrialism. For industrialism represented altogether a new and different civilisation as can be seen from the picture of the Indian civilisation portrayed by Mahatma Gandhi. Industrialism promotes a new set of values and undoubtedly disturbs the peace and distorts the grace of life.

Betrand Russell speaks of certain inherent tendencies of industrialism.[12a] His picture of industrialism vindicates Mahatma Gandhi's outright rejection of industrialism. In the modern industrial sociey, says Russell, man is no longer 'self subsistent' but is dependent on scores of arts and crafts carried on by scores of others for his day to day survival. Industrial society develops certain vital organs, the

destruction of which paralyses the entire organism 'What is more highly organised is more sensitive.' Therefore, lawlessness and destructiveness can do far more harm in an industrial community than they can where methods of production are more primitive. As a case in point, our attention may be drawn to the ability or organised industrial labour to subvert and to hold society to ransom. The power and control of the Government over the individual varies in direct proportion to industrialisation. Industrialisation relieves man from his bondage to nature and in turn man is freed from tradition and religion especially. He is secularised or the process of dehumanisation begins. But industrialism diminishes the freedom of the individual in relation to the community and there is diminution of individuality in a throughly industrialised community. Consumption pattern, taste etc., are usually uniform. It is difficult to differentiate between one town and another, one street and another, one house and another, one man from another and indeed a man from a woman! Art, romance and individual affection decay in an industrial society since they involve preservation of individuality in oneself and recognition of it in others. Family loyalties are destroyed. Increased affluence and opportunities for earning one's own income by every member of the family frees members of the family from loyalty to one another. Indeed family loyalties grow out of fashion. Man's outlook becomes more and more utilitarian. Men seems to exist for bread alone. Russel echoes our own concern as he says 'Man's true life does not consist in the business of filling his belly and clothing his body but in act, thought and love, in the creation and contemplation of beauty. If the world is to be regenerated, it is in these things, not only in material goods that all must be enabled to participate.'[13] But the inherent tendency of industrialism is to destroy these things that matter in life.

Perhaps it could be asserted that machine and labour saving devices provide man with greater leisure for the pursuit of these very ideals which we fear industrialism is destroying. With increased income and attraction of pleasure, it is a big gamble to expect masses of the industrial society to use their leisure time for the promotion of finer and more graceful arts of life. Post-war industrial prosperity enabled some European countries to give a five day week for the workers. The two day week-end has become a time of merriment and pleasure seeking away from home for these workers. The thin hold that 'Sunday' had on those who believed in religion also slipped away as the extra holiday along with Sunday was too attractive to sacrifice it for worship in the Church for an hour. The church is wondering how it can din the serious concerns of life into the reluctant ears of the holidayers. Sunday is no longer a holy day, it is a holiday!

Contemporary America echoes the voice of Mahatma Gandhi:

The objections against the machine age of Mahatma Gandhi found its sophisticated echo even in contemporary America in the voice of Galbraith in his *New Industrial State*. The highly industrialised community of the United States of America has been the marvel and the cinosure of the world. Hundreds of representatives of this civilisation have been proclaiming its glory. Hundreds more from all other countries have praised it chiefly for the freedom and the dignity of the individual it is supposed to promote. But imperceptibly the industrial economy has been transforming itself into a dragon that was swallowing bit by bit all the noble features of human life. The dragon is represented by the large corporation. It is not only the freedom of the individual in the large corporation that is threatened but that of even a millionaire owner of the Corporation himself! Galbraith traces the growth of the techno-structure which now rules industrial society. The hero of the capitalist society, "the entrepreneur, the individualistic, restless with vision, guile and courage."[14] has been replaced by the techno-structure. The Group Personality has emerged integrating the individual into the group. The motive of the private profit of the individual or the family has been displaced by the techno-structure for whom maximum profit is no longer the motivation. The huge advertising machinery has taken the job of influencing the consumer behaviour and the much advertised sovereignty of the consumer is disappearing. The free market, the corner stone of the free society has been superseded by the planning and advanced technology of the large corporation. The individual initiative and genius have no longer any price in this industrial society. Specialised knowledge, talent and experience go into group decision-making. The guiding intelligence—the brain — of the enterprise is no longer the management, but it is this group known as techno-structure. Prices are predetermined and the conmer is indoctrinated by and yields to the pursuasion of the advertiser. The power of the large corporations is supreme in controlling production and distribution of goods and services. This could be seen in the fact that in 1963, the income of the General Motors was 20.7 Billion Dollars which is 15,525 crores of rupees.[15] Our India's national income for the year 1963-64 was only Rs. 15,460 crores and in 1962-63, it was 14,740.[15] Our national income for that year was less than the income of one corporation in USA. About 500 to 600 corporations, therefore, control the income and the lives of 200 millions of Americans and indirectly affect the economy of the world as a whole. In terms of freedom of the individual, consumer's choice, pattern of consumption, function of the market, and the like, Galbraith concedes that there is no difference between an industrial society of capitalist America and that of a totalitarian socialist state and calls this resemblance 'the principle of convergence.'

Inevitability of the loss of the Soul of life :

Even under conditions of freedom therefore industrialisation inevitably leads to the destruction of all that man desired to preserve, all the non-material things that make life worth living. That is why Mahatma Gandhi wailed in the language of the Bible, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" I am aware that informed critics like Professor Meade are unable to to accept the inevitability of the new industrial state of Galbraith's description.[17] Yet Professor Meade concedes that influence of the techno-structure is setting the general tone in society, particularly in judging national success in terms of the out-put of physical product, in the creation of unnecessary consumer's wants and in the consequential neglect of leisure and of social amenities and proceeds further to say that 'I heartily agree with Professor Galbraith that some counter weight for this sort of cultural influence is highly desirable.[18] From time to time, the evils of industrialism unfold in diverse forms and in greater severity. Thus, Galbraith too vindicates Mahatma's basic fears of the modern industrial society.

Relevance of Gandhi for Modern India :

In the passage from *Hind Swaraj* quoted earlier picturing Mahatma Gandhi's ideal society, there are many aspects of the economy which are impracticable. A static economy with limited wants and a built-in resistance innovation and growth is something that will never succeed. Gandhiji was aware of it and therefore he prescribed it as his own ideal and he expressed that it was impossible to reverse the course of modern economy. But at the same time, Mahatma Gandhi's message is relevant to the modern day in many respects. From the short term development point of view Mahatma Gandhi is relevant to modern India on two important aspects.

(1) He insisted on the vast masses of people be rehabilitated and India's socio-economic structure built on the agricultural economy. We have ignored this aspect to the peril of our economy. Taking the example of small-sized economies of the West, in terms of both physical resources and population, we have put the cart before the horse by giving priority to industrial sector and neglecting agriculture. The vast rural sector of the country where more than 400 millions of people live is the one that should give us food, clothing, industrial raw material, capital necessary for the development of agriculture and industry. It is true agricultural sector cannot perform the job on such a large scale under Gandhian methods of limited wants and use of simple tools. But the basic message is that the capital and consumer needs must be produced from the land and that should be the foundation of Indian economy. If industrialisation is geared to agriculture providing roads, rural electrification, godowns, transports, marketing and refregeration facilities for dairy and animal husbandry,

products, this would give employment to millions of people in the rural sector and increase their incomes. This is what Mahatma Gandhi wanted: to introduce that type of machinery that would provide employment to all the people and avoid exploitation. This could be best secured by agriculture-oriented industrialisation of the Indian rural sector.

(2) Gandhiji's favourite theory was that bread should be earned by the sweat of the brow. Industrialisation should not save people from work and make them idle. Therefore he wanted production by masses and not mass production. In this particular context, he did not mind implementation of this principle even by force. This again is extremely relevant to modern India. The rural sector has 400 millions of people living in it, representing a vast and powerful economic resource for building the economy and society. Conversion of this vast human resource into an economic asset would provide the necessary capital for transforming the rural sector into areas of highly productive activity. Instead of using the idle human resources, our socialistic ideal enthusiastically puts all these millions at the receiving end in order to share a product that they have not contributed anything to produce or share the product that does not exist in real terms. If at all it exists, we procure it on credit and supply it to them. Therefore it is time we take the Biblical advice of Mahatma Gandhi 'In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread.' Translated into economic terms, this means use the human resources productivity.

Long term relevance of Gandhi :

From a long term point of view, Mahatma Gandhi is very relevant to the modern situation. We have seen that in the warnings given against the modern industrial civilisation, Mahatma Gandhi was not lonely. A mathematician philosopher came out forcefully against the dangers of modern industrial civilisation representing Europe,, the cardle of industrial civilisation and now an outstanding economist warns the economists themselves that 'modern developments and technology and industrial organisation are leading to fundamental changes in the nature of society the far reaching implications of which we neglect to our peril.'

Europe and America had no choice between traditional and modern civilisations. Their industrial civilisations, had just 'growed' into such from the traditional societies. But to-day, we in India are making a choice deliberately in favour of modern industrial civilisation and at the same time we are invoking from time to time the good name of Mahatma Gandhi for success in our efforts. We are also swearing by the greatness of our culture, our civilisation and our

value system but at the same time by laying down strong foundations for the industrial civilisation, we are raising forces of materialism and secularism that would ultimately destroy all that we believe to be good and glorious. Are we clear about our choice? If not, is it not time to take a look at what we are creating? Again we are building this industrial society under systematic plans of development. But as far as the cultural and social values are concerned, we are allowing them to drift. This again is a contradiction. We are aware the West is wailing over the loss of these values of life. The West realises today that man shall not live by bread alone but the industrial civilisation seems to give them no choice. Like a huge colossus, it is overpowering their own wills and they are helpless. We have opened the gates of industrialism — the flood gates of industrialism. Shall we not then turn to the wise counsels of Mahatma Gandhi and prevent the emergence of a helpless situation so that we may not later wail over the loss of concern for Truth Beauty and Love, the foundations of culture and civilisation.

1. John Gunthuh: *Inside Asia.*

2. Quoted by Mahadev Desai in his preface to *Hindu Swaraj* or *Indian Home Rule.*

3. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 43-45.

5. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, August 25, 1946.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, August 1, 1936.

8. *Ibid.*

9. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, September 14, 1934.

10. Quoted by V. S. Mathur and J. S. Mathur: *Gandhian Economic Thought*, pp. 543-544.

11. J. C. Kumarappa: *Why the Village Moments*, Q. 39, p. 167-172 and *Harijan*, May 19, 1946.

12. M. K. Gandhi: *Hind Swaraj*, p. 45. *Harijan*, November 2, 1934, p. 301.

12a. Bertrand Russel: *The prospects of Industrial Civilisation*, 1959, pp. 33-50.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

14. John Galbraith, *The New Industrial State.*

15. *Ibid.*

16. Approach to IV Five Year Plan.

17. E. J. Meade: *Is the New Industrial State Inevitable?*

18. *Ibid.*

T. S. Rama Rao

THE IMPACT OF GANDHISM ON THE INDIAN LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL THINKING.

Mahatma Gandhi, like so many other political leaders in the pre-independence era, was a lawyer, and he was a very successful one at that, commanding an extensive practice in South Africa. He was also a barrister, nurtured in the traditions of the British Bar. Strangely enough, he does not seem to have ever thought about or analysed the implications of that grand bequest of English Common law to the world viz. the rule of law, guaranteeing the liberty of the individual from arbitrary curtailment by the executive and equality of all persons before the law, these rights being safeguarded by an independent and impartial judiciary. This is all the more remarkable in view of the widespread adoption of English notion of liberal democracy, by the educated classes, ever since the introduction of the study of the English language in India on the initiative of Macaulay. Equally strange was Gandhiji's wholesale condemnation of the legal profession. He condemned 'the propensity of lawyers to welcome disputes instead of settling them, to exploit the miseries of other people for private profit and to indulge in luxuries.' And the thought that 'their greatest disservice to Indian Society was that they helped the British to tighten their rule through unjust and dishonest means.'[1]

Such an opinion was perhaps the consequence of the fact that the law enacted by the British in India and the judiciary which administered it, were aimed at the suppression of the nationalist movement, and personally sent the nationalists to jail and subjected them to severe deprivations. Nevertheless it is surprising that Gandhiji seems to have totally ignored the inherent merits of British Jurisprudence. This is perhaps due to the fact that Gandhi was not interested in bookish, academic study of issues, as Nehru was, and was not an 'intellectual' in the traditional sense of the term, but was pre-eminently a practical and pragmatic statesman.

Anyhow, this indifference of Gandhi to the merits of British Jurisprudence, was, in sharp contrast to that of his political Guru, Gokhale, who 'saw the hand of Providence in the Indo-British Connexion.'[2] and was keenly sensitive to the positive aspect of British administration, chiefly the British political ideas of liberal democracy and the rule of law.

There might well have been another reason for this Gandhian apathy. By the time he appeared on the Indian scene, the politically conscious section in India had got disillusioned with the Indian 'liberals' in view of the limited efficacy of their representations through constitutional means to the British authorities for the redressal of political grievances, which policy was contemptuously treated as one of mendicancy by late Congress politicians; the attractiveness of the political philosophy of liberalism inevitably dimmed as a result of the failure of the liberals in the political field. At the same time, the extremist policy of violence had proved ineffective in the face of the superior might of the Government, and some of the extremist leaders like Sri Aurobindo left the field of politics altogether.

The major source of weakness of both the liberals and the extremists was that they represented by and large only the educated middle class and could not galvanise the rural masses. This was the grand achievement of Mahatma Gandhi who instinctively appreciated the irrelevance of a Western approach in the Indian context, and appealed to the religious and the *dhārmic* values of Indian society with conspicuous success What Prof. Morris-Jones calls the saintly idiom of politics came into vogue. The merit of this idiom was that it transcended the divisive pulls of Indian society based on caste and community and unified the masses under the banner of *Satyāgraha* (soul force), and non-violence, and seemed to make possible the emergence of a uniquely Indian way of politics, without a slavish imitation of Western notions of liberal democracy, however much one liked and admired the latter: Gandhiji said. 'I feel that India's mission is different from that of others. India is fitted for the religious supremacy of the world. There is no parallel in the world for the process of purification undergone...... India can win all by soul force.'[3]

A basic feature of this spiritual approach to politics is that it emphasises not the liberties and rights of the citizens as Western notions of liberal democracy do, but on their duties. Gandhiji thus said:— 'In Swaraj based on *Ahimsā*, people need not know their

rights, but it is for them to know their duties. There is no duty that does not create a corresponding right, and those only are true rights which flow from a due performance of one's duties.' And he deduced from this premise the rather extreme proposition that 'hence the rights of citizenship accrue only to those who serve the State to which they belong.' He added 'People who obtain rights as a result of performance of duty, exercise them only for the scervice of society, never for themselves.'[4] An American writer thus points out: 'The Mahatma who devoted his life to enhancing, uplifting, hallowing human rights as a whole was sharply critical of any demand for particular rights. He spoke not of the rights of women, but of the duties of men and women toward society. He spoke not of the rights of Harijans, but of the duties of upper castes to treat all peoples with justice and love. If this approach seems to encourage 'a feudal paternalistic attitude on the part of the higher castes' even that was less serious for the Mahatma than the selfish consequences of claiming rights. Emphasis on rights divides men, he believed, whereas emphasis on duties unites them.'[5]

While rights and duties are correlative, the significance of the Gandhian approach and its divergence from the 'rule of law, concept arise from the fact that it relegates both the duties and the rights to the moral plane only. The question of implementing and enforcing Rights through the humdrum process of judicial decree is irrelevant and impossible under this approach.

The Gandhian approach to constitution making, is similarly based on an apparent rejection of Western political institutions of parliamentary democracy, and he lays emphasis on the concept of a decentralised state consisting of concentric village republics. Gandhiji elaborated his plan in an article in the *Harijan* on the eve of transfer of power in these words: 'Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus every village will be a republic or Panchayat having full powers. In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever widening, never ascending circles, Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units.

Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle but will give strength to all within and

derive its own strength from it. I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought. If Euclid' point, though incapable of being drawn by human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture has its own for mankind to live. Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in its completeness.[5] Gandhiji's ideas in this regard were developed furthere by Mr. S. N. Agarwal, in his book '*Gandhian Constitution for Free India*,' and Gandhiji himself stated that he found nothing in the book 'that was inconsistent with what he would like to stand for.' Under the 'Gandhian' Constitution, the scheme of Government was briefly as follows: 'The primary political unit was to be the village panchayat, whose members would be elected by the adults of the village. The panchayat would control chowkidars (watchmen), patwaris (the men who kept the land and tax assessment registries), and police and schools. It would also assess and collect land revenue, supervise cooperative farming, irrigation, and interest rates, as well as khadi and other village industries.

Above the village panchayat came a hierarchy of indirectly elected bodies. First came taluka and district panchayats, each comprised of the sarpanchs (Panchayat leaders) of the next lower panchayats and having only advisory powers over them. Members from district and municipal panchayats would make up the provincial panchayat, which would elect a president to serve as head of provincial government, Presidents of a provincial panchayats would comprise the All-India Panchayat, whose president would be the head of state and of the government, which would be ministerial in character. Among the responsibilities of provincial panchayats would be transport, irrigation, natural resources, and a cooperative bank. The national panchayat would be responsible for such things as defence, currency, customs, the running of key industries of national importance, and the coordination of provincial economic development plans.'[6]

The Constitution proceeds on the basis of the assumption, fully subscribed to by Gandhiji, to the effect that 'the State that governs best, governs least.' It was the further hope of the Gandhian that this Constitution would do way with the need for political parties.

Gandhiji himself put forward two plans for an allied cause, viz. the future of the Congress party, the first in January 1946 and the second one, an elaborate version of the earlier plan, presented on the day of his assassination on January 30, 1948, which is now called his testament. 'This plan would have disbanded the Congress as 'a propaganda vehicle and a parliamentary machine' and turned

it into a social service organization based on a nation-wide network of panchayats. Each village panchayat, in Gandhi's plan, would form a unit; two such panchayats would constitute a working party with an elected leader. Fifty leaders would elect a second-grade leader, who would co-ordinate their efforts and who would also be available for national service. Second-grade leaders could elect a national chief to 'regulate and command all the group."[7]

Both the Gandhian plans, relating to the constitution and the Congress party were rejected. The latter was rejected by the Congress Working Committee, and the former was done indirectly by the Constituent Assembly, which as we all know, gave India a Parliamentary and federal constitution, with a Bill of Rights on the American pattern and a chapter on Directive Principles based on the Irish pattern. Nehru in one of his letters to Gandhi said that the Congress had "never considered" the Gandhian view of society (as exemplified in Hind Swaraj) 'much less adopted it'[8] and Gandhiji had to acquiesce in the situation in the face of the opposition of the Congress leader.

The Gandhian Constitution based on the formation of a number of village republics, proceeds on an idealistic view about the nature of the Indian villages and the villagers, which Gandhiji seems to have developed. Thus he wrote in the *Harijan*: 'The moment you talk to them (the Indian peasans) and they begin to speak, you will find wisdom drops from their lips. Behind the crude exterior you will find a deep reservoir of spirituality ... Take away this encruslation (of crudeness), remove his chronic poverty and his illiteracy and you have the finest specimen of what a cultured cultivated free citizen should be.'[9] Gandhi failed to realize fully the significance of the samier side of rural India, viz., the strong hold of caste on the villager, and seems to have been carried away by the charismatic hold he had over them and got the impression that the unsophisticated villager would best implement his philosophy of truth and non-violence, given full autonomy and the chance to do so.

Dr Ambedkar, who had come from the Scheduled Castes, the age old victims of Indian casteism, and who was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee in the Constituent Assembly, naturally opposed the proposals for investing governmental powers in the village panchayats and graphically described the opposite philosophy in these words: 'I hold that these village republics have been the ruination of India. What is the village but a sink of localism, a den of ignorance, narrow-mindedness and communalism? I am

glad that the Draft Constitution has discarded the village and adopted the individual as the unit.'[10] Dr Subbaroyan ably summed up the consensus in the Constituent Assembly in favour of the principles of Western liberalism and democracy thus: There are two things that the British have left behind for us; one is the efficiency of the civil service and the other is the rule of law. And I think both these points ... have been incorporated in this constitution. If there is anything I would like to cling to in the future of this country it is this rule of law.'[11]

Another important item of the Gandhian plan that needs to be considered in the context of the Fundamental Rights enunciated in the Constitution, is the conception of the trusteeship of property holders. Gandhi was a revolutionary, though a non-violent one, and he was uncompromising in his call for the eventual liquidation of the vested interests, though by the peaceful method of conversion of heart. He once said that 'socialism or even communism, is explicit in the first verse of *Iśopaniṣad*."[2] viz. *Iśāvasyam idam Sarvam*. He evidently interprets the word "Iśa" as referring to people, and not to God or *Brahman*, as the traditionalists do.[12a] He has also stated: 'Real Socialism has been handed down to us by our ancestors who taught: 'All land belongs to Gopal, where then is the boundary line? Man is the maker of that line and he can, therefore unmake it. Gopal literally means shepherd, it also means God. In modern language it means the State, i.e. the people.'[13] Nehru also has noted: 'I was happy to have Gandhiji's declaration that there must be a devesting of ,vested interests though he laid stress that this should be by conversion not compulsion. As some of his methods of conversion are not far removed, to my thinking, from courteous and considerate compulsion, the difference did not seem to me very great.'[14] Finally it may be noted that in a formula on the theory of Trusteeship prepared by his disciplines with the full concurrrence of Gandhiji, it has been expressly stated that the right of private ownership of property will not be recognized except inasmuch as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare.[15] One may also note that in an interview with Louis Fischer, Gandhiji seems to have tactily approved the forcible ejection of Zamindars by the tenants as he is said to have remarked that "the Zamindars will cooperate by fleeing." Nevertheless, the Constituent Assembly, while seeking to exclude judicial review of the adequacy of compensation in cases of eminent domain under Art 31 of the Constitution, expressly provided in Art 19 (1) (f) that every citizen shall have the right to acquire, hold and dispose of property, subject to reasonable restrictions in the

interests of the general public, the question of what is reasonable being implicity to the judiciary to determine.

Gandhian precepts, of course, find same place in the Constitution, mainly in Chapter IV relating to directive principles. Thus Art. 42, provides that "the State shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government.' Art. 47 advocates prohibition, and Art. 48 the organization of agricultural and animal husbandry, and prohibition of cow-slaughter. Art. 51, postulating the promotion of international peace and security, and directing the settlement of international disputes by arbitration, has been interpreted as having been inspired by the Gandhian conception of non-violence. Besides, there is one article in the Fundamental Rights chapter, providing for the abolition of untouchability. I may note finally that the Gandhians inside as well as outside the Assembly, criticised the Constitution for abandoning Gandhism, and dubbed it a miserable failure."

I am afraid that by this long chronicle of the rejection of Gandhian precepts the Constituent Assembly, I may have sorely tested the non-violent temper of this eminently Gandhian audience. Hence let me hasten to draw attention to the fact that the picture of the impact of Gandhism on constitutional and legal thinking is not a wholly sombre one. For, it is not right to say that by adopting the principles of liberal democracy and the rule of law, the Constituent Assembly rejected Gandhism. Prof. Bhaskaran has thus aptly pointed out 'Liberal democracy as a political philosophy is not incompatible with the political ideas of Gandhiji. ...... Liberal democracy does not demand centralization. Both Gandhism and Liberalism emphasize the moral value of human freedom and the virtue of philanthropy. Liberalism has no place for physical violence in politics. Gandhism is the Indian version of the liberal democratic humanism of the west.' [17]

While this is undoubtedly true, one has to concede that there is a deviation from Gandhism in the Constitution, and what is more significant, this event but symbolised a decisive breach between Gandhi and his leading followers especially Nehru and Patel. We may briefly study this development as it has a bearing on our theme. A recent leftist writer has drawn attention to the conflict between Gandhi and the dumvirate of Nehru and Patel, relying mainly on Michael Brecher's biography of Nehru.[18] On the eve of independence, Gandhi seems to have developed second thoughts on the issue of Partition and to have desired to launch *Satyāgraha*, to prevent the division of the country. But he yielded to the combined opposition of both Nehru and Patel. Such opposition

has been described as due to the desire of the disciples to taste the fruits of power, instead of carrying through the revolution of the master. We may draw attention to the interesting parallel of Mao Tse Tung, using the Red Guards to put down tendencies towards constitutional settling down on the part of the so-called revisionists headed by Liue Shao Shi (dubbed as China's Kruschev), and his theory of permanent revolution. But Gandhi unlike Mao was a democrat and yielded to the opposition of Nehru and Patel. I would ascribe the stand of Nehru and Patel, not to the desire to enjoy power, but to a natural and laudable desire to let the country settle down, and work out its destiny by legal and constitutional means, now that power was being transferred to India, even if all the objectives of the fight for independence were not realized. One cannot blame them for opting for evolutionary methods when they had a chance of success. But Gandhi was ever a revolutionary and a visionary. He perhaps saw instinctively the evil consequences of partition and of the attrition of the role of Congress from being a mass movement to that of a political party and felt the need for a revolutionary, though peaceful upsurge, to prevent the decay on the moral fibre of the country. A revealing incident that occured in this period was the offer of Gandhiji to the Viceroy to transfer power entirely to Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League, in a bid to prevent partition. History has proved that partition has been a failure, and that instead of reconciling the two new states of India and Pakistan and the Hindus and Muslims, it has only served to externalise the communal menace and has created a near-permanent hostile neighbour to India. Gandhiji's offer, reminding us of the statesmanlike act of the Canadians in electing a French-Canadian as their Prime Minister recently, *may* have healed the breach between the two communities. But none can be certain of this. And it is not surprising that the Congress party rejected Gandhiji's offer. Once again Gandhiji acquiesced to the verdict of the majority. But his natural buoyancy and optimism had left him, especially after the communal holocause that overtook the country while his cherished disciples left him and embraced the cause of liberalism, the masses who had implicitly followed him over all the previous decades during the fight for freedom, equally deserted him and abandoned his message. Dr. Ambedkar's picture of the character of rural India proved, after all, more correct than the earlier, roscate vision of Gandhi about it.,

But it is pecisely for this reason that Gandhism has an abiding relevance at the present day, for, if Dr. Ambedkar proved right in his diagnosis of the malaise of India, was he right in the remedy that he prescribed? In other words, did liberalism succeed and

did the Constitution that was drafted 'with the individual as its unit' as he called it, prove a success? Well, eighteen years of the working of the Constitution have proved that it is not the individual, who is the effective political unit to day, but caste and community. Political commentators have commented extensively on the crucial role of the 'dominant castes' in present day politics and on how adult franchise has only entrenched the role of caste. Candidates are chosen by all the parties in elections on the basis of the majority or dominant castes in each locality, and political power and seats in Assemblies, municipal bodies, and all public institutions are in effect shared between the different castes and communities in proportion to the votes they command. Communal representation against extension of which to the Harijans, Gandhi conducted his celebrated fast of 1920, is being implemented in fact though not in law. As early as 1945, Prof. Bhaskaran noted with acute percipience: 'Caste has entered politics to the dismay of all right thinking men; but it is not because we have caste but because we have never had western political democracy before ...... And given time, we may even acclimatise western democracy and produce hereditary political castes to run our parliamentary institution."[19] Referring to the crucial role of caste in the organization of the Congress party, ruling in almost all states in India then, Prof. Morris Jones pointed out: Village India, playing its own game of politics in relation to outside *Rāj*, has been adjusting itself to Congress power."[20] The recent events seem to prove that the dominant castes manipulate through all the political parties, and if the present trend continues there is a danger that the system of political parties itself may become irrelevant and that *Varṇāśrama dharma* shorn of its religious contents may become translated as an axiom of Indian political practice, with only the hierarchy of castes being changed in their order of influence and importance.

This development has important consequences in the field of law also. Indian law is becoming largely group-oriented and not individual-oriented. Laws affecting the interests of the dominant rural groups or the landed gentry leading them ranging from the Untouchability Acts to the Land Reform Acts are either subverted at source by leaving sufficient loop-holes, or at the stage of implementation. Provisions relating to reservation of seats and jobs, for the backward classes, have resulted in an accentuation of the race of mast castes for being dubbed "backward." And constitutional conventions also reflect the imprint of the new politics of the group. Thus, ministerial resignations in the light of adverse strictures by

Courts are only formal preludes to subsequent elevations to power, after a short interval, of the condemned Ministers unlike in the West, where, under similar circumstances they would once for all retire from politics.

Thus the rule of law is in danger of being substituted by the rule of groups. This may lead to some sort of stagnant and low temperature political stability, if our inimical neighbours do not take advantage of the consequent inevitable inefficiency and lowering of standards, and step up their hostilities and subversion; but then in the highly competive modern world the country would have to pay a high cost for this "stability" in terms of loss of efficiency and characted and of an ubiquitous prevalence of mediocrity. Has not the revoluntionary message of Gandhi, a relevance in the present context, when evolution seems to have suffered a freekish and regressive lapse into anachronism? If liberal democracy fails in India, the seemingly impractical and visionary schemes of Gandhian Sarvodaya would seem to be a feasible alternative to prevent the spiritual atrophy facing the nation and they deserve a serious study from this angle by jurists, political scientists and philosophers in the country.

1. T. K. Unnithan: *Gandhi in Free India.* p. 93.

2. See Bhaskaran: *Sociology of Politics,* p. 168.

3. *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi,* p. 405 (See R. K. Prabhu: *India of My Dreams*).

4. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan,* 25-3-1939.

5. Creighton Lacy: *The Conscience of India* (New York, 1965), p. 151.

5a. M. K. Gandhi: *Sarvodya* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1954), pp. 67-68.

6. See Granville Austin: '*The Indian Constitution — Cornerstone of a Nation* (Oxford, 1966) p. 30.

7. *Ibid.,* 28-29.

7a. Quoted in Jawaharlal Nehru: *Mahatma Gandhi* (Bombay, 1949), p. 40

8. *Ibid.,* p. 39.

9. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan,* 28-1-1939.

10. Constituent Assembly Debates, Vol. VII, p. 39.

11. *Ibid.,* Vol. VI, p. 962.

12. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan,* 20-12-1937.

12a. Under the traditional interpretation, on the other hand, the injunction in the last quarter of the verse "Ma gridhah Rasyasuith Dhanam" asking me not to covet another's wealth, embodies the contrary philosophy of protection of private property.

13. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan,* 2-1-1937.
14. Jawaharlal Nehru, op. cit. note 8, p. 114.
15. See Mahatma Gandhi: *Sarvodaya,* op. cit. note 5, p. 48.
16. Louis Fischer, *A Week with Gandhi.*
16. Louis Fischer: *A Week with Gandhi.*
18. See p. Govinda Pillai: *Gandhi Versus the Duumvirate,* p. 11.
20. See C. M. Philips (Edt): *Politics and Society in India,* p. 133.

S. Shankar Raju Naidu

THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM AS MAHATMA GANDHI VIEWED IT

Introduction

Those were days of revolution for resurrection, agitation for abiogenises, self-destruction for National construction and non-violent war for International peace. Those were days when consolidation of the Indian subcontinent was to be accorded the highest priority, and fight for the freedom of India was the clarion call of "*Bhāratamāta* ".

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was one among those whose sacrifice and service were Himalayan in response to this sacred call. He was the greatest stalwart among those who thus fought following faithfully the path of '*Satya*' and '*Ahimsā*', that is 'Truth' and 'Non-violence', for the freedom of the Indian Sub-continent. He was lovingly and respectfully designated as *Mahatma*, which means much more than a 'Great Soul'.

The life-mission of Mahatma Gandhi was the liberation of the people of India from the bondage of foreign yoke in order to achieve political, social and economic progress with cultural stability. He left no stone unturned to bring in a sense of unity among the citizens of India who were divided due to diverse elements that existed at different levels. He strove to pool in all the forces which could be profitably used to link up all the people of India.

He bugled out a constructive programme of eighteen items to his people for achieving this end with passive resistance. One of the items was a solution to the language problem which was and still is the most controversial of problems. He visualised a common Indian language as a convenient medium of expression for all Indians to come into close contact.

Mahatma Gandhi was a patriot, pure and simple. If weighed between nationalism and internationalism, Gandhiji stood for the former than for the latter. "I am satisfied," he said, "with the service of my own country...... She has a prior claim to my service." His nationalism extended from Tamilnad to Kashmir and Baluchistan to Assam. His paramount concern was the unification of the Indian Sub-Continent through means found and manufactured purely in this land. His patriotism forced him to be purely Indian.

In order to understand the views of Mahatma Gandhi, it is imperative on our part as a pre-requisite to have a clear picture of his feeling, willing and thinking before our mind's eye. He felt more for the illiterate, poor and socially downtrodden masses than for the rich and traditionally high in society. Picturing the dream of his India-to-be, he said, "There will be village poets, village artists, village architects, linguists and research workers. In short, there will be nothing in life worth having which will not be had in villages. Today, the villages are dung-heaps. Tomorrow, they will be like tiny gardens of Eden where dwell happy intelligent folk whom no one can deceive or exploit."[2] He clarified his dream further by emphasising, "I do not believe that industrialisation is necessary in any case for any country. It is much less so for India."[3] He categorically stated, "This is real India, my India, for which I live."[4] He thought of all people living in India as brethren rather blood brothers; and said, "Language is like our mother."[5] It is in this context that we have to understand the views of Mahatma Gandhi on the language problem.

Problem Analysed

The Language problem, as Mahatma Gandhi viewed it, may broadly be analysed under four headings. For the sake of clarity and convenience, I propose to have the following order:—

I An International language—English

II Mother tongues or Regional languages

III Lingua Franca: A Common Language: Hindustani

IV Scripts: Nagari, Urdu, Roman and Regional

I An International Language:

(*a*) Mahatma Gandhi genuinely felt the imperative necessity of an international language and has categorically stated that English

should continue as our vehicle for international contacts. He declared, "I have no prejudice against English. A knowledge of English for a few scholars, is necessary for international contacts and for a knowledge of the science pursued in the West."[6] He agreed that "English should be studied in our universities and a very high standard in its use should be arrived at."[7] He has in unmistakable terms accepted the richness of the English language and literature and emphasised its essential study by those "who are to get engaged in national and international commerce and diplomacy, and also who have linguistic talents."[8] He visualised that "the rich English language will ever retain its natural place as the international speech of commerce and diplomay."[9] He undoubtedly wanted those also to study English who would be interested in Western literature, thought and science."[10] He of course, did not want English to "usurp the dearest place in our hearts and dethrone our mother tongues."[11] He was certainly against the learning of English "for the sake of false pride or questionable social advantage."[12] Explaining the rightful place of English to the students, Mahatma Gandhi stated, "I would have our young men and women with literary tastes to learn as much of English and of the world languages as they like and then expect them to give the benefit of their learning to India and to the world like a Bose, a Roy or a Tagore."[13] But cautioning them he had said, as prelude, "I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and windows to be stuffed. I want the culture of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave."[14]

He was of the opinion that "English is not difficult to learn" and has stated, "We can learn English in six months."[15] His main objection to English on the one side was that it could not reach the masses and on the other that the English-educated wanted to think in English and speak and live like an Englishman.[16] He, therefore, remonstrated against that aspect with all the force at his command and said, "Among the many evils of foreign rule, this blighting imposition of a foreign medium upon the youth of the country will be counted by history as one of the greatest. It has sapped the energy of the nation, it has shortened the lives of the pupils. It has estranged them from the masses, it has made education unnecessarily expensive. If this process is still persisted in, it bids fair to rob nation of its soul."[17] However he admitted, "I myself have benefitted from many of the precious gems of the great treasury of the English literature............knowledge of English is therefore very necessary for us", and added, "It is one thing to give it its due place and quite another to make a fetish of it."[18] This he further explained and

told that "knowledge of English is necessary to us for the aquisition of modern knowledge, for the study of modern literature, for knowledge of the world ... and such other purposes. As things are, we have to learn English even if we do not wish to. English is an international language."[19] Even after achieving Independence he has stated, "I do not want to forget that language nor do I want other Indians either to give up or forget it."[20]

II Mother Tongues or Regional Languages:

The greatest stress that Mahatma Gandhi laid was upon the mother tongues or the regional languages. He believed that the mother tongue was the easiest, natural and hence the best medium for all for assimilation, comprehension and expression, particularly for the masses for whom he lived and laboured unto his last. He viewed that any foreign medium, however rich and popular it might be, would not only create and broaden the gulf between the educated masses, but also would inevitably maim them mentally for life and make them strangers in their own land."[21] He wanted the mother-tongue of the child to be the medium of instruction at all stages of education!"[22] Here he excludes English, and to the non-Hindi people Hindustani or Hindi too, with equal force. He had implicit faith in the innate capacity of all languages and states. "There never was a greater superstition that a particular language can be incapable of expressing abstruse or scientific idea."[23] He appealed to the educated to translate the best of one language into the other languages of India. The best medium according to him for all purposes, including education, legislation and administration, can be only the regional language or the mother tongue.

He believed in the immortality of all the regional languages of India and stated that "the languages of Tulsidas and Surdas cannot die."[24a] Here it is interesting to note that Tulsidas wrote his *Ram-charit-Mānas* in the *Avadhi* language, *Surdas* his "*Sur-Sagar*" in *Brij Bhāsha*, and Shibli, a close associate of Gandhiji in Urdu. This view, if expanded may cover up Maithili, Bhojpuri and Rajasthani, etc., too of North India which have independent forms and literary traditions but not any educational or official status. He appealed frequently to "the people of one province to learn the languages of other provinces as well", and said, "It is not difficult for a Gujarati to be able to learn Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, Hindi, etc."[25] Regarding his own Mother tongue, Gujarati, he proudly proclaimed, Gujarati is no ordinary language. Poets like Narsinh Mehta, Akha Bhagat and Dayaram have sung in this language."[26] His love for his mother tongue went to the extent of his saying, "I

must cling to my mother tongue as to my mother's breast in spite of its shortcomings. It alone can give me the life giving milk." [27] Here, he gave out a very meaningful and piercing statement about the regional languages of India. He wrote, "It is a matter of shame that the contributions of Chaitanya cannot be read in in any of the other Indian languages and are thus closed to them." Thereafter Mahatma Gandhi turned respectfully towards the immortal Tamil sage Tiruvalluvar and told the people of India, rather with a rare note of regretfulness, "We may not all be aware even of the name of sage Tiruvalluvar. North Indian people certainly do not know his name. Few saints have given to the people as much knowledge as he has done in the minimum of words."[28a] Consequently he wanted that several Northerners and Westerners should learn Tamil.[28b] He was in favour of reading good translations of great works of other languages in one's own mother tongue, and categorically stated, "I do not need to learn Bengali in order to know the beauties of Rabindranath's matchless productions. I get them through good translations. Gujarati boys and girls do not need to learn Russian to appreciate Tolstoy's short stories. They learn them through good translations ....Why need I learn English to get at the best of what Shakespeare and Milton thought and wrote ....We seem to come to think that no one can hope to be like Bose unless he knows English. I cannot conceive of a grosser superstition than this. No Japanese feels so helpless as we seem to do." [29] He offered his own example also and added, "I have read the *Vedas* and *Upanişads*, only in translations,....... and I claim to have grasped their true spirit."[30a] He regarded such a neglect of the regional language or the mother tongue as "a national tragedy of first importance." It is with this background that Gandhiji stated immediately after achieving Independence, "The first and foremost thing is to revive the rich provincial languages with which India is blessed," [31] and appealed for the redistribution of states on a linguistic basis. He hoped that "such a redistribution would be conducive to the cultural advancement of the country," but with the same breath, he also cautioned and said, "But such redistribution should not militate against the organic unity of India." [32]

Regarding the medium of instruction he was prefectly clear in his views and emphasised, time and again, that "the youth of a nation to remain a nation must receive all instructions, including the highest, in its own vernacular or vernaculars" and added, "Surely it is a self-demonstrated proposition that the growth of a

nation cannot keep or establish a living contact with the masses unless their knowledge is received and assimilated through a medium understood by the people."[33] Expressing his considered view on this subject, he stated, "A foreign medium means an undue strain upon the youngsters, it robs them of all originality. It stunts their growth and isolates them from their home."[34] In this context, he has clearly stated, "the Lingua-Franca, *Rashtra Bhasha,* of India could not take the place of the provincial languages—much less English.[35] He felt that in the absence of the mothertongue as the medium of instruction, "our intellects and hearts had been atrophied."

Gandhiji however did not shirk to admit that our regional languages have a long way to proceed for aptly expressing the abstruse and scientific thoughts. Consequently he confessed, "...... We flounder when we make the vain attempt to express abstruse thoughts in the mother tongue. There are no equivalents for scientific terms. The result has been disastrous."[36] But, as has already been stated, he believed in the inherent capacity of every language for expansion, and believed that future writers will take up the challenge and succeed in their aim. Thus Mahatma Gandhi viewed that for the growth of an individual or a linguistic unit, the position of the provincial language i.e. mother tongue or regional language played a paramount part and also that the failure of that will impoverish, enslave and exhaust the individual and the linguistic unit in every manner.

III. LINGUA FRANCA: A COMMON LANGUAGE:

An independent nation, he viewed, should necessarily have, as a pre-requisite, a national language common to all, a Lingua Franca, satisfying the following five conditions [37]

(i) It should be easy to learn for government officials.

(ii) It should be capable of serving as a medium of religious, economic and political intercourse throughout India.

(iii) It should be the speech of the majority of the inhabitants of India.

(iv) It should be easy to learn for the whole of the country.

(v) In choosing this language, considerations of temporary and passing interest should not count.

He believed that " English does not fulfil any of these requirements" and that mother language can compete with Hindi in satisfying these five requirements." Bengali, according to him, came next and he commented, " But the Bengalis themselves make use of Hindi outside Bengal. "[38]

Gandhiji from as early as 1909 felt the need of a common language for all-India intercourse from among the Indian stock. He observed that the language which the largest number of people already knew and understood and which others could easily pick up was indisputably Hindi, as it was used freely by both the Hindus and the Muslims of the North. The same language, he observed, is called Urdu when written in the Urdu character.[39] From the year 1925 Gandhiji preferred to call this language by the name ' Hindustani. ' He explains it as follows :—

" What is Hindustani? There is no such language apart from Urdu and Hindi. Urdu has sometimes been called Hindustani. It means a scientific blend of Hindi and Urdu. There is no such written blend extant. But it is the common speech of the unlettered millions of Hindus and Muslims living in Northern India. Not being written, it is imperfect and the written language has taken two different turns tending to widen the difference by each running away from the other. Therefore the word Hindustani means Hindi and Urdu. "[40]

But later, he changed his opinion a little and gave a formula—Hindustani = Hindi = Urdu[41] instead of his older formula—Hindustani = Hindi + Urdu as explained above. He explained his new formula as follows: "Hindustani is the language which is spoken and understood and used for common purposes by Hindus and Muslims both in cities and villages in North India and which is written and read both in Nagari and Persian scripts and whose literary forms are today known as Hindi and Urdu. "[42]

Gandhiji believed that " Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are words denoting the same language " and that " Hindi was the name for this language used both by Hindus and Muslims before the word came to be used. "[43]

In this context, Mahatma Gandhi told us about a very important historical fact about the very name ' Hindi ' when he wrote—"We must remember that the word Hindi is not of the Hindu coinage, it was coined after the Muslim advent to describe the language which Hindus of the North spoke and studied "[44]

He went a step further and explained it linguistically "The word Hindu is not derived from Sanskrit. The foreigners called the inhabitants on this side of the river Sindhu, Hindus. We have adopted the title."[45] That is to say 'S' changing into 'H' as 'Sapta' to Hapta'.

Gandhiji argued that as the very name was offered by foreigners, Muslims should have no objection to accept the name Hindi or Hindustani. Urdu has no such derivational qualification from any Indian language to its credit, and Gandhiji had liking for that name too and equated all the three in his final formula, though with a little perference to the name 'Hindustani'. He changed the very name of 'Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha' into 'Dakshina Bharat Hindustani Prachar Sabha' and started a 'Hindustani Prachar Sabha' at Wardha independent of and as a protest against the 'Hindi Sahitya Sammelan, Allahabad', order to teach the Lingua Franca of his conception in both the scripts Hindi and Urdu which, he viewed, were indispensable for the sake of Hindu—Muslim unity which was always at the bottom of his heart.

He held the considered view that, "Hindustani would be the best suited interprovincial language for all Indians" and that "neither Persianized Urdu nor Sanskritised Hindi can easily be understood by the masses."[46] But, for a specialised study, and in order to be an expert in this language, he had his own yardstick for measurement. "Mastery of this language", Gandhiji viewed, "will mean mastery not only of the easy Hindi—Hindustani spoken by the masses, but also of the high-flown Hindi full of Sanskrit words and the high flown Urdu full of Persian and Arabic words. Without a knowledge of these, mastery of the language would be incomplete even as one could not claim to be a master of the English language without a knowledge of the English of Chaucer, Swift and Johnson, or master of the Sanskrit language without a knowledge of the Sanskrit of Valmiki and Kalidas."[47] He frequently used to say, "Hindi and Urdu are sisters."[47a] His exemplary love for Urdu is evident from his following statement:—"Urdu is undoubtedly one of the many languages and contains treasures which should be the common property of all India.................... And the parishad[48] just established will fail in its duty and purpose if it does not unlock for all India the treasures to be found in the current Urdu literature."[49] But Urdu too, he admitted, is not a language known to all Muslims of India. Consequently he stated, "It is hardly true as yet to say that Urdu is common to Mussalmans all over India. I know Ali Brothers and I found it difficult to make ourselves understood by the Maplas of Malabar through

our Urdu. We had to have a Malayalee interpreter. We found a similar difficulty in East Bengal among its numerous Mussalmans." [50] About Gujarat too, he gave the same picture and stated, "The Muslims of Gujarat do not know Urdu. They learn it not without difficulty. Their mother tongue is Gujarati." [51]

In the same manner, he also observed, "There is quite a large number of Hindus and others whose mother tongue is Urdu." [52] He told the Madras public once, "In the Punjab all educated Hindus and Muslims know Urdu. They cannot speak Hindi. In Kashmir too good writers of Urdu are Hindus. They do not understand Sanskritized Hindi, but they understand Urdu." [53]

His final view, even after the achievement of freedom, was that Sanskritized Hindi and Persianized Urdu were equally artificial, while Hindustani alone was natural. He expanded his view still further and explained that, "in fact neither Urdu nor Hindi is to be termed Hindustani. Though not in vogue today, Hindustani is a wise mixture of the two" [54a] He proclaimed with perfect confidence that this Hindustani would win at the end. He quoted the National Poet Iqbal's famous song—

"The finest country in the world is our India", and openly challenged, "What am I to call the language of this song Hindi, Hindustani or Urdu? Dare one say that this is not our National language?" [54a] He was of the opinion that "Sanskritized and Persianized Hindi will dry up and fade away as does a rivulet from a small hillock! [55] He believed that "this alone is the perfect National language; all others are imperfect [56], and wanted that "from our hearts the word Hindustani should come out instead of Hindi!" [56a] He told his followers that the learning of Hindustani in its double form is but the beginning of the constructive programme." [57]

Regarding those who should necessarily learn Hindustani, he gave a clear indication when he wrote that "the question of everyone learning Hindustani does not arise. Indeed everyone will never do so. The necessity is for those who have to travel and those who want to serve." [58] He explained his view still further and categorically stated, "Nor do I expect that the millions will ever learn the all-India speech. It will be learnt by the politically-minded and by those who have inter-provincial connections." [59]

He believed that Hindustani is not all a difficult language, particularly for South Indians who possess both intelligence and

discrimination![60] He addressed the people of Madras and said "All of you must learn Hindustani. You may ask anyone coming here from the North or even Andhra to learn all the four languages of the South. Why four only, one may learn even a dozen. That is nothing novel."[61] On the same occasion he had approved of a course to teach Hindustani in six weeks, and told, "It can be learnt without much difficulty. If there is love, there is no question about effort."

He, however, sincerely felt the difficulties of South Indians and stated, "I appreciate the difficulty of the Dravidians . . . . It is not so easy for Tamilians. Tamil and the other languages of the South belong to the Dravidian group".[62]

About his own knowledge of Hindi and Urdu Gandhiji gave out a statement of confession. He admitted, "I know both the languages but I am not versed in either of them. My knowledge of Hindi is very average. I have not had the time to study it from books... My knowledge of Urdu is much less even than my Hindi."[62a] A couple of years previously too, at Indore, he had stated the same fact, " My knowledge of Hindi is nothing. I cannot pass even your Prathma Examination.[62b] He, however, shared a secret with the Madras audience and said, "I should like to share a secret with you. When a person really comes to love Hindustani he will relish talking to his children in it, as also to his friends and his servant if he has one. Today, however, it is English which rules in every home. People seem to be drunk with the wine of English and they speak English in their clubs, in their homes and everywhere. They are demoralised. Such a state of things is not to be found elsewhere. It exists only in this slave country of ours. We have bound ourselves with our own fetters. You must try hard and speak this language not only outside but also inside your homes. My desire is that everyone of you should learn Hindustani."[63] His final statement was. "We have set for ourselves to the goal of spreading Hindustani among the entire people of India."[64] He believed that "English had failed to reach the masses but Hindi would do so in no time."[65] In this context, Gandhiji remonstrated both Northerners and Southerners equally and said without favouring either side, "I freely admit that if it is, as it is, wrong for the Southerners not to learn Hindustani, it is equally wrong for the Notherners not to learn one or more of the Southern languages which have very rich literature."[65a] He had also not forgotten to warn the majority as against the minorities and had advised, "It will be the duty of the majority to see to it that minorities receive proper hearing and are not otherwise exposed to insults. Swaraj will be an absurdity if individuals have to surrender their

judgment to majority." He stressed the same view by saying that "a living faith cannot be manufactured" and added, "I have always held that when a respectable minority objects to any rule of conduct, it would be dignified for the majority to yield to the minority. Numercial savours of violence when it acts in total disregard to any strongly felt opinion of a minority."[68] Consequntly he has stated, "All attempts at having a forced language have proved futile."[69]

On final analysis Gandhiji came to the following conclusion "The distinction made between Hindus and Muslims is unreal. The same unreality is found in the distinction between Hindi and Urdu."[70] .... "To the masses both these languages are foreign and for which they have no use."[71] .... "Rashtrabhasha has only one name i.e. Hindustani."[72] .... "A harmonious blend of the two will be as beautiful as the confluence of the Ganga and the Yamuna and last for ever."[73] He took Hindustani as a sea in which the Ganga and the Yamuna would finally merge.[74] He cautioned the leaders and said, "There was need for the gentlest handling of all such questions."[75]

IV—Scripts :Nagari, Urdu, Roman and Regional :

Mahatma Gandhi viewed that the language problem was inevitably intertwined with the writing system though comparatively he gave a greater stress on the language aspect. Keeping in view the society, he advocated the usage of Nagari and Urdu scripts for Hindustani, and said, "I have at the back of mind a contribution to Hindu-Muslim unity."[76] Even after the achievement of independence and partition of Pakistan, he cherised the same view and categorically stated. "My views in regard to Hindustani and the two scripts remain what they were," and added with greater stress, "My view remains unalterable especially at this critical juncture in our history."[77] He was more in preference for, as a matter of fact, any script of India he wanted this script to be the common script for all the languages of India.[78] He believed that the attempt to force one script or one form of Hindi on any province or district or people is detrimental to the best interests of the country."[79] At one time he told a public gathering at Madras, "Please remember that I say nothing against your languages. Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada must be there and will be there. But why not teach the illiterate in these parts these languages through the Devanagari script?"[80] Expressing the causes thereof, he said, "I think neither Urdu nor Roman has the perfection and phonetic capacity of Devanagari."[81]

He sincerely believed that "one might even learn eight or ten good scripts if one likes them and finds them useful and added, " We should learn at least one South Indian script in addition."[82]

Describing the Persian script he said, "The Persian script is very easy to learn. There are very few fundamental signs to represent 37 letters. No doubt, the joining of the letters causes some difficulty but learning of the alphabet including the joining is a matter of a week at the most, if you give an hour everyday."[83]

Gandhiji categorically dismissed the feasibility of accepting the Roman script stating, " Roman script cannot and should not be the common script of India."[84] He explained it by saying that "sentiment and science alike are against the Roman script."[85] However he gave the example of Europe and asked, "Even Europe which is not one nation has generally adopted one script. Why should India which claims to be and is one nation, not have one script? "[86] " Roman script " Gandhiji stated, " is almost universal in the West .... It has its own great and unique place. It need not aspire after greater."[87] Gandhiji believed that Urdu script could be learnt in three hours and, as an example, demonstrated it in a sevagram school. He stated, " They learnt the primary letters of Urdu in two sittings of thiry minutes each .... They will have learnt the alphabet in practically three hours. I know a friend who mastered it in four hours in a single sitting. "[88]

Gandhiji was of the view that in order to develop Hindustani to the fullest extent, equal status should be accorded to the two scripts. But he also wanted that there should be no compulsion,[89] and added, "In my eyes he who knows only one of the two languages and one script will be half-equipped. If he desires a full certificate from me he must be conversant with both."[90]

Gandhiji asked, "After all, what is the Sindhi alphabet, but an improved edition of Urdu script?"[91] He also stated, "Again we cannot forget that many Hindus and Sikhs are ignorant of the Nagari script."[92] The same he observed in the Hindus and Muslims of Punjab and Kashmir too, and emphasised, "I say to you, therefore, that it is your duty to learnt the Urdu script."[93]

Conclusion

But with all the strong views that Mahatma Gandhi had regarding the language problem, he openly declared that there was a greater thing than language or script. He categorically stated, "But I should be

prepared to put up with their ignorance of Devanagari or Persian script or ignorance of Hindi Grammar, but I should not tolerate for a moment lack of character."[94] In other words Unity to Gandhiji was much more important than language. Explaining this point he said, " It is not that I am making a fetish of language. It is not that I would refuse to have Swaraj if I could have it at the cost of our language as indeed I should refuse to have it at the cost of truth and non-violence."[95] Therefore it must be understood that Gandhiji valued unity, truth and non-violence much more than language. Language to him was only a means to the end in view.

Mahatma Gandhi introspecting his own personality and the title of 'Mahatma', stated, "If I am a Mahatma, it is because I know my limitations and do not transgress."[96]

He rose a step still further and wanted every individual to think for himself or herself and not to accept whatever is said by anybody, however big may be the person. He said, " I want real democracy. If you say 'yes' to every proposal then Democracy will become hypocrisy. Therefore do not say, 'yes' without thought; but tell me just what you really think."[97] He viewed and believed in "None high—None low. All men are equal. "[98] It is with this background that we must approach Mahatma Gandhi. He held the same views regarding the Language problem expressed above even after the long awaited day of political freedom, the 15th of August '47.

Mahatma Gandhi viewed—"Just as Tamil and others are regional languages and Hindustani is the National language, in the same way English is a world language."[99]

I would like to end my paper with a question or a *series of questions. It should be agreed that Article No. 351 of* Part XVII-Chapter IV-of our Constitution was framed after a very careful consideration of the views of Mahatma Gandhi regarding the language problem. In the Constitution it is stated in unmistakable terms—

"It shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, styles and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages."

We find the following languages under the Eighth Schedule ,Articles 344 and 351):

1. Assamese, 2. Bengali, 3, Gujarati, 4. Hindi, 5. Kannada, 6. Kashmiri, 7. Malayalam, 8. Marathi, 9. Oriya, 10. Punjabi, 11. Sanskrit, 12. Tamil, 13. Telugu, 14. Urdu. Sindhi also has now been added as language no. 15.

May I, with due humility, request all of you to ask for yourselves as to whether the Hindi language has acquired a form capable of expressing all the elements of the composite culture of India right from Tamil Nadu to Kashmir? How far has the proposed constitutional Hindi assimilated the forms, styles, idioms and words of other languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule, including Tamil?

Here it is but consistent if I beseech you to kindly note Part XVII of the Constitution wherein it is stated under Chapter I—clause 3—that the Union.

". . . shall have in view the good of the people of Non-Hindi areas."

We must cautiously remember that it includes the present and future citizens of Tamil Nadu as well. Again, in the same Part XVII of the Constitution we find under chapter II-'State Language'—Law 347- ". . . any lauguage spoken by the people of that state . . . "

Has it been truly tried to distinguish between the language actually spoken by the people and the literary language used only by the educated?

Until and unless these questions are properly understood and answered, there can be no salvation or solution to this problem of problems with which the Indian Union is confronted today.

1. *Harijan*, 17-11-1933, *Young India*, 27-3-1924.
2. M. K. Gandhi, *My Picture of Free India*, p. 112.
3. *Harijan*, 1-9-1946.
4. M. K. Gandhi, *My Picture of Free India*, Preface, p. iv.
5. M. K. Gandhi, *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 8.
6. M. K. Gandhi, *To The Students*, p. 22.
7. *Harijan*, 5-10-1952.
8. *Young India*, 1-7-1921.

9. *Harijan*, 21-9-1947.
10. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 200.
11. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 2-2-1921.
12. M. K. Gandhi: *To The students*, p. 26.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
15. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 120.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 91.
17. M. K. Gandhi: *To The Students*, p. 30.
18. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*. p. 11.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
21. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 2-1-1937.
22. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 13; See also M. S. Patel: *Educational Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 232.
23. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 5-6-'28.
24. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 29-10-'38.
24a. M. K. Gandhi: *My Experiments with Truth*, p. 308.
25. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 188.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
27. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 25-8-'46.
28. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 3-4-'37.
28a. M. P. Desai: *Our Language Problem*, p. 2.
28b. M. K. Gandhi: *My Picture of Free India*, p. 126.
29. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 9-7-'38.
30. S. Radhakrishnan (Ed.): Gandhiji—His Life and Work', Published on 75th Birthday, p. 286.
30a. Lecture by Gandhiji in Ceylon at Mahindra College, Galle, on 24-11-'27.
31. M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, 21-9-'47.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
33. M. K. Gandhi: *To the Students*, p. 30.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 236.
35. M. P. Desai: *Our Language Problem*, p. 91.
36. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 91.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
39. M. K. Gandhi: *Constructive Programme*, p. 20.
40. Jag Pravesh Chander (Ed.): *Teachings of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 302.
41. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 8-2-'42.
42. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 113.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
44. *Harijan*, 3-4-'37.
45. *Harijan*, 10-8-'47.

46. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijam, 26-10-'47*
47. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 58.
47a. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 16-6-'46.
48. Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, Nagpur, founded on 27th of April 1936.
49. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 9-5-'36.
50. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 60.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 175.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
54. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 16-6'46.
54a. *Harijansevak*, 25-1-'48.
55. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 10.
56. *Ibid.*, Foreword, p. viii.
56a. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
57. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 1-3-'42.
58. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 107.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
61. Silver Jubilee Address at the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras, on 25-1-'46.
62. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 6.
62a. *Ibid.*, p. 158.
62b. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
65. Gandhiji's presidential address at the 2nd Gujarat Educational Conference, Broach, 20-10-'17.
65a. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 27-7-'47.
66. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 8-12-'21.
67. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 16-3-'22.
68. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 9-11-'29.
69. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 7-4-'46.
70. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 21-1-'20.
71. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 5.
72. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 24-12-'38.
73. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 10.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 145.
75. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 26-10'47.
76. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 105.
77. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 18-1-'48.
78. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 76.

79. *Ibid.*, p. 76.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
81. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 120; See also M. K. Gandhi: *Our Language Problem*, p. 88.
83. M. K. *Gandhi:* Harijan, 1-3-'42.
84. S. Radhakrishnan (Ed.): *Gandhiji—His Life and Work*—published on 75th Birthday, p. 280.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 282.
86. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 74.
87. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 12-4-'42.
88. *Harijan*, 8-3-'42.
88. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 8-3-'42.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
91. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 9-11-'47.
92. M. K. Gandhi, *Harijan*, 11-1-'48.
93. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 143.
94. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 17-7-'37.
95. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 3-4-'37.
96. M. K. Gandhi: *Thoughts on National Language*, p. 123.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
98. M. K. Gandhi: *My Picture of Free India*, p. 220.
99. *Harijansevak*, 25-1-'48.

V. Shanmugasundaram

ECONOMIC IDEAS OF MAHATMA GANDHI IN RETROSPECT

The ideas of Gandhi for over three decades prior to independence and those of men of public affairs and scholars interested in Indian economy during the last two decades are presented in contrast in this paper. The mass organization of which Gandhi was the unrivalled leader—has been charged with the responsibility of the administration of the country for a long time. In the making of the constitution, in pursuing peace or war, in shaping agriculture and industry, transport services, professions, which Gandhi could never have anticipated, crucial decisions have been taken on Gandhian or non-Gandhian spirit. Likewise the consumption attitudes or the want requirements of the people are now in contrast to those anticipated or longed for by Gandhi.

It is not as if the challenge to his thoughts came only when he was no more. He encountered a class of writers and thinkers who lived amidst "well-stocked library shelves",[1] and to them, according to Gandhi, the realities of Indian peasant life are not known. Disagreeing with an economist's outline of the Indian economic programme, Gandhi said it is typical of those who are not familiar with village life. Gandhi's instance that no minister should be paid more than Rs. 500, that every Indian should wear Khadder, they should live a life of simplicity, season politics with ethics, work for Harijan uplift and spread basic education are some of the Gandhian ideas which permeate the thoughts and actions of many Indians in public life even now regardless of their political affiliation. Notwithstanding these widely known Gandhian characteristics, there are many un-Gandhian attributes of men and women in the service of India. As we gather to pay tribute to the father of the nation and to assess the impact of ideas on the economy of

today, may we not critically reflect on the economic ideas that prevail in India in the light of what Mahatma Gandhi said. Nothing could please Gandhi more than truthful observations, however critical they be.

Among the many ideas which were powerful during the Gandhian and post-Gandhian eras, with contrasts are amenable to examination, a few could be raised here. Economics of Khadder was a comprehensive body of ideas, to combat the British commercial drain from India. With the rise of modern mills the Khadder movement has had a set back. The self-sufficient villages, and their panchayats which he idealized gave place in post-Gandhian era to massive and centralized planning unprecedented in any part of the world other than the Soviet Union.

II

These shifts in ideas recall to our minds the Greek city which was the apple of the eye of Aristotle. He had no time to pause to think of a more self-sufficing territorial unit than the city state. Thus the notion of a self-sufficing territorial economic unit is ancient. The Greek city state according to Aristotle fulfilled the needs of a civilized life. He believed in the rare human capacity of the Greeks and affirmed that the arts of civilization could be achieved only in the city-state. His pupil Alexander, made an epoch-making career, by un-Aristotelian pursuit of an empire which spanned the continents. Alexander's policy was a blatant contradiction of all that Aristotle had taught. Alexander the Great had accepted, many a fact which he thought his master failed to perceive, or only those facts which he as a military man could observe.

It is in the tradition of learning that the student should improve upon his teacher, though it would not always be possible to do so. Shaw claimed that he is taller than Shakespeare, because he stood on his shoulders. We are not sure about it. Among the economists too, we have had such successions. Keynes controverted Marshall, and dismissed all his writings as a piece of classical obsolescence. Now Keynes is out dated more than Marshall.

In the fullness of time when the current Indian economic thought finds its exponents presenting the results of their researches, we could have the ideas on Indian economy in two main streams, viz: one of non-professionals like A. O. Hume, Dadabhai Naoroji, Gokhale, Gandhi and Nehru and the other of the professional

economists who have taught Indian economics in different centres of learning.

We have now explorations in the first school of thought. Long before a man of action decided upon any determined course of activity, he had consciously or unconsciously the impact of earlier thinker. It is idle to search for the economists who influenced Gandhi's ideas. He took a self-tutored course jointly in politics, philosophy and economics. The subject of economics can fruitfully be combined with philosophy and the Oxford practice to this day is to offer an inseparable Politics, Philosophy and Economics—PPE—Honours course for Economics under-graduate. The French and continental tradition has been to combine law with economics. Hence the Gandhian claim that he cannot separate these three subjects is in keeping with the best of scholastic practices.

III

Gandhi was a keen student and had the humility to learn from any quarter. Before Gandhi appeared on the Indian Scene, Dr John Mathai [2] had already published *"Village Government in British India."*[3] He based his work on the writings of earlier servants, Sir Henry Maine[4] and B. H. Baden Powell.[4a] Sir Henry Maine developed his ideas on self-sufficient villages on personal observation and informal reports. British public opinion was already enthrawled by the knowledge of such ancient and live institutions, the villages of India, which were the effective economic functionaries. It was impossible for a keen student like Gandhi, who was called to the Bar at London, not to know the works of the great jurist and writer Sir Henry Maine. The villages, though on the decline in the 1910's have been the subject of study for restoring their importance. In the same year 1913, when Dr. John Mathai began his work in London on Village Communities, the first professor of Economics of the University of Madras, Dr. Gilbert Slater has also commenced his pioneering study of South Indian Villages.[5] Both of them were influenced by the writings of Sir Theodore Morison's study of Village Communities in India, completed two years earlier.[6] We cannot, therefore, venture to say that Gandhi pioneered in thinking about villages about whose economy nobody has thought earlier. Nevertheleess, when he arrived on the Indian scene he was able to sense the pulse of village life and arouse the zeal of the villagers to such a pitch of idealism that they were charged with the potentialities for unnerving the powerful industrial economy of Britain.

Between 1919 and 1948, several issues of *Young India* and *Harijan* revealed the thought of Gandhi on a variety of economic issues. Among them those repeatedly and devotionally referred to by him were the ideas of villagism and swadeshi movement which were dear to him for ensuring food and cloth supply in a way consistent with human dignity. One of the earliest issues of '*Young India*', published the text of the Swadeshi vow, thus: "I solemnly declare, that henceforth in Hindustan I shall not wear cloth except such as made in India, out of Indian cotton, silk, or wool, spun in India. This vow shall be binding on me for life."[7] This was the ideal and pure Swadeshi vow. He provided for a sub-ideal and mixed Swadeshi vow, permitting the cloth woven in India whether made of foreign or Indian material. He gave this vow to the nation not as an academic economist, but as a result of his participant observation of Indian poverty. Travelling throughout India, when he heard the young and old tell him "we cannot get cheap cloth, we cannot have the means wherewith to purchase dear cloth ...... What are we to do?",[8] he thought it was his duty to give them a satisfactory answer and that was the Swadeshi reply.

We administered the success of Swadeshi and now made Khadder the symbol of the non-violent struggle. It was to him a commodity far superior in competition for the mill-made cloth of Lancashire. It was the absorber of the most valuable of resources, human labour and the promoter of the self-respect of peasants as well as the townmen. So much of potential power in the Indian village frame work, few of the earlier writers on rural economy would have found, and few indeed in later years improved upon it. He has cultivated Village Economics, so much, that later studies have become pedestrian.

Gandhi adored the rusticated spinning wheel and was undaunted when many reminded him that in those days of Mills and sewing machines, only a lunatic can hope to succeed in reviving it. Back came the reply from Gandhi that inspite of the typewriter, the hand has not lost its cunning. When 300 millions of Indians are unemployed or under-employed, he thought that the first duty of his was to ensure the work of the people. Whereas Dadabhai Naoroji spoke half a century before the dawn of Gandhian era on the economic drain of India, an effective method to counter the machine technology was not available to Indian public, and Gandhi provided it. He argued "the British are an intelligent people. The officials are a wise and shrewed lot. I know this. That is why I present the spinning wheel to my people. We cannot over-reach the British by the glibness of our tongue or by the

power of our pen. As to our threats, they have grown quite accustomed to, while, as to our physical powers, it can avail us, but little against their bombs rained down from their aeroplanes. But these people understand and respect patience, perseverence, determination and capacity for organization. Cloth represents the biggest item of their trade."[9] Gandhi knew that the spinning wheel will get not only the British respect for Indians but also bread in exchange for it. Today, as an Independent nation—instead of receiving cloth, we have started receiving wheat and rice, and a more un-Gandhian practice there cannot be. Gandhi was a great man of action. Many economists have encountered him in vain. In 1928, when Prof. C. N. Vakil wrote for the *Young India* articles, hiding the tiny wheel in a little unseen arc of the circle of suggestions, he retorted that research in a well-stock library can produce convincing essays on poverty but no remedies to it. Unless work was found for the unemployed toiling millions, he thought that there was little hope of reducing Indian poverty. Twenty years of un-Gandhian non-concern have lapsed leaving the problem of unemployment worsened by haphazard industrialization, and ill-directed investment in education.

IV

It would be untrue to interpret him as the opponent of cities and industries as such. The largely self-contained villages he thought will serve the industries and cities to the mutual benefit of all of them in the subsequent stages of development. The inner core of his reasoning was one of religion and gradualness of progress. Contrary to his missionary pursuit was the post-Gandhian halting and half-hearted attitude towards urgent tasks. Instead of Gandhian self-reliance arousing us, we had to be told by the American Ford Foundation team about "India's Food problem and how to meet it." The team stated that the target of 110 million tons of food-grains output was to be reached by 1966. We were about 20 million tons behind it even in 1966. It is here we are face to face with un-Gandhian practices. Without economic sophistry in which planning in India is shrouded, Gandhi, if he were alive today, would have led a revolt against the people of India who live in poverty, by deliberate design.

The spirit of Gandhian attachment to hand-spinning was that the use of machines could wait till the entire labour of India has been put to sufficient use. In contrast to this attitude, rapid industrialisation and heavy investment have created idle capacity in Indian industry and a lop-sided economy. Gandhi was over conscious and

his followers were reckless in their economic-minded venture.[10] Gandhian thought is not against the adoption of science and technology provided the religious fervour and dignity of labour could be ensured. What with fundamental discoveries in plant-breeding and soil-chemistry India is today in a position to outproduce the food requirements of her people and to export food to the neighbouring countries, if only work is done in the Gandhian spirit.

In his own life time, Gandhi was not without sympathetic critics. Prof. J. M. Kumarappa had an argument with Gandhi that he regarded the All India Village Industries Association as a step child. Khadder to him was the important activity in the villages, and industries had lesser importance.[11] Gandhi's prior ties did not brook distraction of his energies to develop industries or cities. Khadder, he thought would give income to the people and transform the seven lakhs of villages in India such that they would soon become largely self-contained. That was preferable to half-a-dozen cities of India and Britain living on the exploitation and ruin of peasants.[12] India did not have heavy capital equipment or domestic savings. Hence in Gandhian economics, the man himself is deemed an efficient transformer of physical energy into mechanical motion of the spinning wheel. His was a pre-electricity age of India; had Gandhi visited some of the electrified villages of India, he would have rejoiced.

The method of deep empirical enquiries have revealed in recent years, valuable new ideas in economics. Equally so, insight, has played a part. Gandhian contribution to economic ideas came out of his insight. When he spoke of the 300 million unemployed people of India as a reservoir of unlimited strength, little did economists realise then that one day—thirty years hence—a Ranger Nurkse thesis would become the basis for capital formation in underdeveloped countries. That was the Gandhian notion. Professor Nurkse's finding [13] is that disguised unemployed labour has high potentiality for capital formation, and it should not be kept idle, but kept busy with near zero capital. The workers have a right to strike, Gandhi said and added: 'Our sympathetic strikes have to be strikes of self-purification, i.e., Non-cooperation." He stated the following maxims for successful strikes:

(i) There should be no strike without a real grievance.

(ii) There should be no strike, if the persons concerned are not able to support themselves out of their own savings or by engaging on some temporary occupations, such as carding, spinning

and weaving. Strikes should never depend upon public subscriptions or other charity. "Strikes must fix an unalterable minimum demand, and declare it before embarking upon their strike." [14] We are still far away from that age of industrial peace.

V

Decentralisation is the technique of non-violent democracy. Gandhi has been advocating the decentralization of economic and political power in the form of more or less, self-sufficient and self-governing village communities. He regarded such communities as the models of non-violent organization..

Gandhi of course, did not mean that the ancient Indian small republics should be revived exactly in the old form; that was neither possible nor desirable. Necessary changes will have to be introduced in views of modern and changed circumstances and needs. He was of definite opinion that Constitution of India should be essentially based on the organization of well-knit and co-ordinated decentralised bodies. "That State will be the best", declared Gandhi, "which is governed the least."

The imperative need for the devolution and decentralization of political power is not a Gandhian "fad." It is being recognized by most of the political thinkers of the West. "If men's faith in social action is to be revivified," observes Prof. Joad "the state must be cut up and its functions distributed."

Economics of decentralization according to him would spare us from the evils of excessive mechanization. Though Gandhi was against many features of modern industrialisation, it is wrong to think, that he was hostile to all types of machinery. What he objected to was the "Indiscriminate multiplication of machinery." "Mechanization is good," he said, "when the hands are too few for the work intended to be accomplished. It is an evil when there are more hands than required for the work, as is the case in India."[15]

That was Gandhi's stand in 1934. A few years later in his Madras Budget speech of 1938-39, what Mr C. Rajagopalachari said, about the disribution of powers, under the Government of India Act 1935, has a modern ring. "An All India Federation, as it has been alluringly called, still sits like a nightmare on the plans and policies of the provincial Governments. It is not yet certain whether wisdom will prevail, and a more natural and suitable form of Central Government will be devised which will make strength

and reality flow into the veins of the provincial governments." That was his reference to the Act 1935 which gave a high measure of provincial autonomy.

Between 1930's to 1960's we have so disregarded the issues of decentralisation, that as stated in 1961 we have to remind ourselves in the words of Mr. Rajagopalachari: "opposed to compulsion and state control is the way of freedom and maximum provision for industrial enterprise and initiative which Gandhi advocated."[16]

On finance and taxation, Gandhian constitution drafted in 1940's stipulated certain guideliness which can easily be noticed as conspicuous by their absence, in later fundamental laws of India, though in some contexts the ommission is inescapable.

(a) National Finance should be suitably decentralized so as to make local self-government a reality.

(b) Taxation in the form of direct manual labour by the villagers shall be encouraged.

(c) Top heavy expenditure on Military and Public Services shall be considerably reduced. Except in the cases of technical foreign experts, no servant of the State shall be paid more than Rs. 500 per mensem.

(d) State expenditure on Public utility services like health, education and research shall be proportionately increased.

(e) Free India shall not be responsible for payment of unreasonable public debt, internal or external, incurred by the present irresponsible Government of India.

(f) Income-tax shall be provincial source of revenue.

(g) Since there will be total prohibition in free India, there shall be no income from excise taxes on intoxicants.

The objection of Gandhi to the payment of salt tax was symbolic of his protest against taxation without representation. When the sales tax was levied by Government responsible to the people, he said that there could be objection to it. But it did not occur to him that the State power of taxation and economic management would go to such an extent as to officialise cooperative endeavours. There could be no approval of representative authority which would

destroy the individuals whose self-respect is inviolable. In the wake of the movement for cooperative farming in India many adherents to Gandhian individualism dissociated themselves from it.

On prohibition Gandhi fervently hoped that the people's Government would pass the requisite law, educate public opinion, open refreshment rooms and literary associations so as to detract the people from intoxicating drinks. That was feature of improving the health and nutrition of the people and he would never have been a party ruining the health of the people by administrative breakdown or surreptious consumption of illicit and injurious liquor or encroachment upon personal liberty without any safeguards under law.[17]

The Governments now are nominally following the policy of prohibition for statutory ornamentation or are blatantly giving it up under the pretext or raising more funds for the common good. When repeated amendments to the prohibition Act (for the sixth time in 10 years), were brought before the legislature, leaders of public opinion, especially medical experts were anxious to express concern for the health of those affected by illicit and injurious drinks. It was then said: "Prohibition was a greater success when Mahatma Gandhi started as an All-India measure. More people were then convinced and more people got away from drink."[18] When a few States followed it and others did not, when mass communication and spirited public service gave way to laws and commands of official authority, the educative and moral foundation prohibition has eroded.

VI

On population control Gandhi had uncompromising ideas. No doctor worthy of his professional etiqutte would accuse the patient for acquiring an illness. He would first summon his professional skill to cure the patient. Later a word of preventive medicine found him in order. Contrary to this attitude is that of professional economists in their legions today in India who repeat *ad naseum* that India is over-populated and population control is the only way for salvation. Gandhi spoke of moral restraint. But he prefixed it with a firm faith in the human being who with his pair of hands can easily find enough and more for his stomach and other needs. He urged the man to work. Having ignored the importance of full employment and the need for priorities in the production of food we have the indiscrete advertisements and the cult of population control, with little thought on eliminating unemployment and

food shortage. International political economy may warrant the anxiety of the sparsely populated rich countries about the populousness of the countries of Asia. But fellow Indians should take it as a challenge for work, rather than have no policy other than reducing the population by fair or other means to please erstwhile colonial masters, during the last three centuries, have occupied a disproportional surface of the earth for their sparse population, and are now anxious that they grow faster, to fill their territories and that the other races dwindle or grow at lower rates.

Economic planning did not appeal to Gandhi. When some of the delegates who attended the Nagpur All India Economic Conference, in 1939 asked him what he thought about the Planning Comission which Mr. Nehru has organized before Independence he had this cryptic comment—"I cannot say anything I have not studied. It was not discussed in my presence at the Working Committee ...... I have purposely divested myself of responsibility so far as the general body of discussions are concerned"[19] ...... and when asked further for his blessing he replied: "What can be the use of my blessings in a thing I do not know, or in which I am not interested."

This un-Gandhian attachment to Planning Commission persisted with greater fervour in the later decades. An eminent Finance Minister, John Mathai pointed out that with scarce resource, a Planning Commission would be a superfluous body of free economic and social development when there was an effective finance ministry. Nehru disregarded this suggestion, and John Mathai resigned. Later Dr. B. R. Ambedkar thought that the Union Cabinet would not allow him to pilot the Hindu Code Bill, to hasten the removal of the age old social tyranny. When he resigned, he said, "that Gandhi's successors have no friends left," and they were persuing the lonely furrow with none even in the U.N. to second their resolution." That was in 1951, and he also objected to India spending Rs. 180 millions on the Army out of a revenue of Rs. 3,500 millions." This is valid criticism even today.

That was the beginning of economic centralization in India. The Planning Commission of which the Prime Minister was the Chairman often vetoed the Cabinet and soon we had it on the authority of Dr. Chintamani Deshmukh the next finance Minister who become the casuality of the instrument of centralization. With the cabinet itself Gandhi was a great believer in individuality, and democratic processes. His political and economic philosophy were

that of Jeremy Bentham. When Netaji Subash Chandra Bose sought freedom from the political and economic exploitation of Britain by taking recourse to arms and forming an exile Government in Singapore, not withstanding his Quit India movement, Gandhiji would not have any thing to do with a leader. For, to him, we know, the means were as important as ends. Sardar Patel and Dr. Chakravarthy Rajagopalachari have expoused the Gandhian ideals in affirming individualism some political successors have departed from the Gandhian ideology.

Economics is now distinctly of two schools of thought, positive and normative. Gandhian ideas pertain to the school of normative economics and those who venture to comment on him are to be versed in the Benthamite, classical welfare percepts.

VII

It may be asked, if the faith in Gandhi's ideas is wanting why do the followers lionize him? The mass adoration which he commanded has not withered or waned away even after his mortal coils have been laid to rest. Gandhi was a great focal power for organizing mass support in rural areas, and in the ranks of those who have, in one stage or other in their life, actively participated in a struggle for national freedom under Gandhi's influence. It was the goodwill left by Gandhi which they loved and to that end all the sophistry and subtle practice they could device, have been deployed.

Gandhian economic ideas were meant to serve the exigencies of freedom struggle, to meet the challenge to the unarmed subject race, to form a united front against a great imperial and economic power and to unleash the hidden spiritual and religious fervour of the people towards their realization of nationhood. The era of Gandhi was marked by widespread illiteracy and poor standards of science and technology. His was an era which had not seen the bounty of the United Nations and its subsidiary world organizations which make it the responsibility of the richer nations to come to the aid of the poorer countries. Liberal aid has corrupted developing countries in no less a measure than mill cloth and other consumer goods from industrial countries had impoverished the colonies in the 18th and 19th centuries. Many a leader of the stature of Gandhi have to stalk through the land of India and other developing nations of Africa and Asia, if we are to clean the cobwebs of economic entanglements and mismanagement and to redeem the nations for a position of abject dependence without dignity of

labour, self-help, or self-respect, and give them a place among the comity of nations as conscientious and hard-working peoples dedicated with religious fervour to develop materially and socially in harmony with individual dignity, character and inner strength.

1. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 1-11-'28, p. 364.

2. Mathai, John: *Village Government in British India*, The Fisher Unwin Limited, London, 1915, p. 211.

3. Sir H. S. Maine: *Village Communities in the East and West.*

4. B. H. Baden Power: *The Indian Village Community.*

4a. B. H. Baden Powell: *Land Systems of British India* (3 Vols.).

5. Slater Gilbert: *Some South Indian Villages.* Vol. I, Oxford, 1918.

6. Sir Theodore Morrison: *Economic Transition in India*, Murrey, London, 1911.

7. M. K. Gandhi, *Young India*, 13-5-'19.

8. *Ibid.*, 13-5-'19.

9. *Ibid.*, 27-5-'26.

10. Theodore Gregory: *India on the Eve of the Third Five Year Plan*, Associated Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta, 1961, p. 81.

11. M. K. Gandhi: *Constructive Programme, Its Meaning and Place*, p. 7.

12. R. B. Gregg: *Philosophy of Indian Economic Development*, Ahmedabad, 1951.

13. Ranger Nurkse: *Problems of Capital Formation in Under-Developed Countries*, Oxford 1955.

14. M. K. Gandhi: *Young India*, 22-9-'27.

15. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 16-11-'34.

16. C. Rajagopalachari: *Satyam Eva Jayate*, Madras, 1961, p. 780; 'Congress Statism or Gandhian Way', *Swarajya*, 11-3-'61.

17. A. L. Mudaliar: *Searchlight on Council Debates* (Madras Prohibition Act of 1937 (Amendment), dated 6th November 1947), Longmans, 1960, p. 326.

18. A. L. Mudaliar: *Searchlight on Council Debtes* (The Madras Prohibition (Amendment) Bill, 1958, dated 18th March 1958), p. 338.

19. M. K. Gandhi: *Harijan*, 28-1-'39, p. 438.

Md Yousuf Kokan

COMMUNAL HARMONY AS VIEWED BY MAHATMA GANDHI

India is a country of diverse religions, languages, castes, creeds, colours and cultures. The differences in the ideologies and customs very often led to communal hatred and internal warfare. The ignorance and illiteracy did not allow the people to understand the view-points of each other. The communities were generally under the influence of their religious leaders and temporal heads and they acted as their leaders wanted them to do in all matters relating to their political as well as the religious and social matters. All the people were divided into almost water-tight compartments. The British rule in this country was responsible for creating political consciousness among the various communities, especially the Muslims and the Hindus, who began to quarrel with each other on several points, like cow-slaughter, music before mosques, safeguards for minorities, Hindi-Urdu controversy, separate electorates, joint-electorates, abduction of girls, suddhi sangthan etc.

The communities were so much at logger heads with each other that it was not possible to create trust and confidence in the minds of the minority communities. The Indian National Congress was not considered as the only representative body of the Indian people. Muslims started a new organisation under the name of Muslim League in the year 1906 and later on the Hindus also established their own organisation under the name of Hindu Mahasabha in the year 1922. Leaders belonging to both these parties sometimes bitterly criticised the views and policies of the nationalist Muslims and Hindus. The communal newspapers fanned the fire of distrust, disgust and suspicion among the various communities in India, which was one of the main causes for making the gulf wider and wider until the two-nation-theory was propounded and was advocated so vehemently that it resulted in the division of this great sub-continent. It was thought that the grievances of the minority communities—particularly Muslims — have come to an end and both the communities — the

Muslims and the Hindus—thereafter will live with peace and magnanimity, but recent events have proved that before the division the Hindus and the Muslims were just like two brothers quarelling with each other to have a bigger share in the property of their parents and now they have become two bitter enemies ready to cut the throats of each other without any regard for solving their problems in a peaceful manner.

Among the few nationalist leaders of India, Gandhiji was the first and foremost who tried his level best to establish harmony and peace among the various communities in India. After his return from South Africa in 1915, he vehemently supported the cause of the khilafat Movement, which was purely a Muslim Movement, and worked with Ali Brothers and other Muslim leaders of the time, just to win the friendship of the Muslims and through them to win the support of the Muslim world for the freedom of India.

The communal concord and harmony achieved during the period of the Khilafat movement continued to exist during the period of non-cooperation Movement in 1920-21. Thousands of Muslims and Hindus courted arrest and they were put in jails. It seemed that the dawn of freedom was quite near. But the national prejudices were made to show their ugly heads and serious riots broke out in the various parts of the country over petty problems like cow slaughter and music before mosques. Gandhiji was an ardent advocate of cow protection. He held the view that he would not kill a human being for protecting a cow, as he will not kill a cow for saving a human life, be it ever so precious.[1] But inspite of it, he rebuked those vegetarian Hindus who wanted to convert people to their creed by violence. He clearly wrote:— "To attempt cow protection by violence is to reduce Hinduism to Satanism and to pursue to a base end the grand significance of cow protection."[2] He also wrote "I make bold to assert without fear of contradiction, that it is not Hindusim to kill a fellowman even to save the cow."[3] He sincerely appealed to the Muslims saying: "To my Mussalman friends I would but say one word. They must not be irritated by the acts of irresponsible or ignorant but fanatical Hindus. He who exercises restraint under provocation wins the battle. Let them know and feel sure that responsible Hindus are not on their side in their trial in any bargaining spirit. They are helping because they know that the *Khilafat* is a just cause and that to help them in a good cause is to serve India, for they are even as blood brothers born of the same mother — Bharat Mata."[4]

He made it very clear to all the people, that "Hindu-Muslim unity must be our creed to last for all time and under all circumstances. Nor must that unity be a menace to the minorities—the Parsis,

Christians, Jews or the powerful Sikhs. If we seek to crush any of them, we shall some day want to fight each other."[5] He also wrote: "Hindus and Mussalmans, Christians, Sikhs and Parsis, must not settle their differences by resort to violence, and the means for the attainment of Swaraj must be non-violent. This I venture to place before India, not as a weapon of the weak."[6]

The music before mosques also was one of the vexed questions which had become a common cause for frequent clashes between the Muslims and the Hindus. Gandhiji did not want compulsion to be used by either of the communities. He once wrote: "Hindus and Mussalmans prattle about no compulsion in religion. What is it but compulsion if Hindus will kill a Mussalman for saving a cow? It is like wanting to convert a Mussalman to Hinduism by force. And similarly what is it but compulsion, if Mussalmans seek to prevent by force Hindus from playing music before mosques? Virtue lies in being absorbed in one's prayers in the presence of din and noise. We shall both be voted irreligious savages by posterity if we continued to make a futile attempt to compel one another to respect our religious wishes."[7]

When the suddhi sangthan (conversion) Movement was started by the Arya Samajists to bring back the Muslims into their fold by force or by coersion it created a widespread resentment among the Muslims. The Muslims also started the Tabligh (preaching) movement and vilification of each other's religion went on for some time until it culminated in the writing of a short pamphlet "Rangila Rasul," in Urdu, depicting the Holy Prophet as a passionate person enjoying sexual pleasures with a number of women. Referring to these two movements Gandhiji wrote : What is the meaning of my trying to convert to the service of God (for that must be the implication of shuddhi or Tabligh) when those who are in my fold are every day denying God by their actions?

He was told that both Arya Samajists and the Mussalmans virtually kidnapped women and tried to convert them. He was totally opposed to such conversions. "Conversion" according to him "is a heart process known only to and by God. It must be led by itself. Those who believe in it have a perfect right to follow their own course without let or hindrance, so long as it is kept within proper limits; so long as there is no force or fraud or material inducement, and so long as the parties are free agents and of mature age and understanding."[8] He further remarked that he believed in quality rather than quantity. But it was a fashion in his days to rely upon quantity even at the cost of quality.[9]

All these convincing arguments could not bring the Muslims and the Hindus to their senses. A Muslim fanatic murdered Shardhanandaji and this serious incident would have become the main cause of widespread bloodshed between the Muslims and the Hindus if Gandhiji had not the full courage of defending the murder and the murderer, in a resolution moved by him in the session of the Indian National Congress, in December 1926. He did not regard the murderer as guilty. He put the blame on those who excited the feelings of hatred against one another.[10] According to him newspapers were resposible for such ugly deeds. He has rightly pointed out, "The newspaper man has become a walking plague. He spreads the contagion of lies and calmnies. He exhausts the foul vocabulary of his dialect and injects the virus into the unsuspecting and often receptive minds of his readers. Leaders intoxicated with the exuberance of their language have not known to put a curb upon their tongues, or pens."[11] He equally appealed to the Hindus and the Muslims not to lose sanity in the name of religion. He once wrote: "It should be a matter of pride to you as Hindus to think that there was amongst you at least one mad Gandhi who was not only just to the Mussalmans but even went out of his way in giving them more than their due."[12] When an idol was removed and Nandi temple was desecrated, Gandhiji wrote: "........You may call me an idolator if you will. I see God everywhere and in every thing. I tell you God would never approve of those acts of desecration."[13] He quoted examples from Islamic history how the good Muslims retired into seclusion at the time of discord and strife among the Muslims. He himself wished to retire into seclusion saying "How often have I wished to retire thus into seclusion. And though I know that history will take note of my efforts as one of those who was a servant of God, who committed Himalayan blunders, but who had also the courage to confess them and repent for them, I know that today I can do no better than be silent on this question."[14]

When his attention was drawn to the desecration of temples by the Muslims and Gandhiji was reproached by one of his friends remarking, "you are responsible for the mischief that is going on in our midst. If you had not dragged the Hindus in the Khilafat agitathe recent tragic events would not have happened. But you alone can now save us," Gandhiji wrote: "I do not repent for my part in the Khilafat agitation. It was a duty I discharged towards my Mussalman countrymen. The Hindus would have been wrong, if they had not helped their brethren in their distress. However ugly the present look of things may be, the future generations of the Mussalmans will recall with gratitude this great act of friendship on the part of the Hindus. But the future apart, as I believe in the proverb that virtue

is its own reward, I should always defend my action on the Khilafat question. I therefore received the friend's message of rebuke with perfect calmness."[15] He further remarked: "It matters little to me whether the perpetrators of shameful deeds are Hindus or Mussalmans. It is enough to know that some of us are blaspheming a patient God and doing inhuman deeds in the sacred name of religion. I know too that neither assasination, nor fratricidal acts can possibly save religion. Religion worth the name can only be saved by purity, humility and fearlessness of the utter most type among its professors. It is the only shuddhi and the only propaganda."[16]

Regarding the inflamatory literature like "Rangila Rasul" etc. which commanded patronage by both the sections, Gandhiji condemned such writings and asked the local people and their leaders to find a way of stopping these publications or at least discrediting them and distributing clean literature instead, showing tolerance for each other's faiths.[17]

The question of political safeguards for Muslims and other minorities had become a very difficult problem at the time of the Round Table Conference in 1931. No settlement was coming forth and Gandhiji tried his level best to convince the Muslims and the Sikhs of his sincerity in this respect. He wrote: "I have the same love for the Mussalmans as for the Hindu. If I could tear it open you would discover that there are no compartments in it, one reserved for the Hindus another for the Mussalmans and so on. And therefore I hold myself responsible, when I find a Mussalman running at a Hindu's throat and vice versa."[18]

On the question of minorities his views were very clear. He was not at all prepared to be a party to the endless process of vivisection. The small minorities according to him, had a perfect right to demand full civic rights. But they could not be encouraged to ask for separate representation.[19] He went to the extent of beseeching Mr Jinnah 'on bended knees' to offer his proposals for the amicable settlement of the question of minorities, which was flatly refused by the latter.

During the period: 1937-1942 the gulf between the Muslims and the Hindus got wider and wider, and the two-nation-theory propounded by Mr Jinnah led to the division of the country into India and Pakistan. All the extraordinary efforts on the part of Gandhiji to unite the people proved futile and fruitless. He accepted the Partition remarking that if the eight crores of Muslims desired partition no power on earth can prevent.[20] He further pointed out that it was

only his personal opinion in accepting the partition. Others can resist it but they will have to do it at the peril of the cvil war.[21]

When the slogans and activities of a communal organisation to drive away the English and to subjugate the Muslims were brought to the notice of Gandhiji, he wrote: "They (Englishmen) cannot be driven out except by violence superior to theirs. The idea of killing the Muslims if they do not remain in subjection may have been all right in the by gone days; it has no meaning today."[22]

Gandhiji once remarked that he was not a Muslim but he claimed that Islam did not teach enmity to any man. If he was, as he believed, a true Hindu, he was equally a good christian and a good Sikh and a good Jain. No religion teaches man to kill fellowmen because he holds different opinions or is of another religion.[23]

The announcement of the division of the country by the British Government was received with mixed emotions. There were several Muslims who saw Gandhiji and expressed sorrow and grief over what had happened. Gandhiji also expressed his sorrow at what he considered a mistaken policy of the Muslim League. He still held the view that if not more than ten representatives from the Congress and the Muslim League sit together they might come to an agreement.[24]

The division of the country created new problems like that of the language—whether it should be Hindi or Hindustani with Nagari script. When the U.P. Government adopted Hindi with Devanagari script, Gandhiji wrote that the Hindus "should treat the Muslims as equal citizens. Equality of treatment demanded respect for the Urdu script. They must not produce a state in which respectable life was impossible and still claim that they did not want the Muslims to go. If in spite of really equal treatment they (the Muslims) chose to go to Pakistan, it was their own lookout. There should be nothing in their behaviour to scare away the Muslims. They should be correct in their conduct. Then they could serve India and save Hinduism. They could not do so by killing the Muslims or driving them away or suppressing them in any way.[25]

The bloodshed that started in Pakistan and India immediately after the division pained Gandhiji extremely and he wrote: "We are daily paying the heavy price for the unconscious mistake we made, or better still, I made, in mistaking passive resistance for non-violent resistance. Had I not made the mistake, we would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of weak brother killing his weak brother thoughtlessly and inhumanly."[26]

Gandhiji was killed on account of his continuous support for the weak and the minorities. Though he did not succeed in his mission to unite the hearts of the people belonging to various communities the words uttered by him and speeches delivered by him in this respect will ever be ringing and resounding in our ears and will serve us as guide-lines in solving the intricate problems that will arise from time to time relating to the intercommunal peace and harmony.

1. M. K. Gandhi: *Communal Unity*, p. 10.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 81.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 128.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 131.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 144.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 178.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 312.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 312.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 340.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 370.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 665.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 687.